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SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

ساڈھ روزنامہ بنگلور

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Suvendu set to become BJP's first CM in West Bengal

Mamata's ex-Man Friday makes history

KOLKATA, 8 MAY

Senior BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari is set to become the first BJP chief minister of West Bengal after being unanimously elected the leader of the BJP legislature party on Friday. He will be sworn in on Saturday.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah presided over the election ceremony after a meeting of newly elected BJP MLAs and senior leaders in Kolkata, formally sealing BJP's emphatic capture of Bengal.

Shah congratulated Adhikari at the legislature party meeting. Shah said Adhikari would provide stable governance and fulfil the aspirations of Bengal's people. "He is a fighter."

The elevation of 55-year-old Adhikari, once outgoing Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's closest political aide and organisational troubleshooter, represents not merely a change of government but the culmination of a dramatic political rupture that has reshaped Bengal's political landscape over the past five years.

Shortly after his election, Adhikari drove to Raj Bhavan and met Governor RN Ravi to stake a claim to form the new government. Ravi invited him to take the oath as Chief Minister at Brigade Parade Ground. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Shah, Chief Ministers of NDA-ruled states are expected to attend the swearing-in ceremony.

BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari meets West Bengal Governor RN Ravi at Raj Bhavan on Friday and stakes his claim to form a government —PTI

> **The people of Bengal have given us a historic mandate. We will fulfil all the promises made in the BJP's poll manifesto in Bengal**
>
> —Suvendu Adhikari, West Bengal Chief Minister-elect

Adhikari also addressed BJP legislators and supporters in an assertive but conciliatory speech that attempted to project both confidence and administrative restraint.

"Bhoi is out, and bharosa is in," Adhikari declared at the legislature meeting, echoing Modi's campaign slogan and drawing loud cheers from party workers.

The people of Bengal have given the BJP a "historic" mandate.

"Let the Centre and the state work together to fulfil the aspirations of the people of Bengal," Adhikari added.

Adhikari also announced commissions headed by retired judges to investigate corruption allegations and atrocities against women during the previous TMC government.

The BJP won 207 in the 294-member West Bengal Assembly, delivering a big blow to TMC, which managed 80 seats only. —PTI

KC, RC or VD? Kharge gets report on next CM

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

The two Congress observers, appointed to seek the opinion of newly-elected MLAs in Kerala, submitted their report to AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge on Friday and urged the party High Command to take a final decision on the chief ministerial candidate.

Ajay Maken and Mukul Wasnik spoke to all of Congress' Kerala MLAs and MPs and submitted their observations to the party leadership.

Sources said a majority of the party MLAs are in support of making AICC General Secretary (organisation) KC Venugopal the Chief Minister while the public is favouring senior party leader VD Satheesan, who was the Leader of Opposition in the outgoing Kerala assembly. Besides Venugopal and Satheesan, senior party leader Ramesh Chennithala is also in the race.

Maken and Wasnik discussed with Kharge the observations made by the new party legislators.

Sources said Kharge has called all the three contenders for talks before taking a final decision. They said Venugopal is trying to use his influence in the party leadership to win the race; his proximity to Rahul Gandhi is well known and may come in favour. —PTI

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Suspense looms: Left takes TVK closer to majority

Vijay meets Guv for 3rd time to stake claim

CHENNAI, 8 MAY

TVK Chief Vijay, buoyed by fresh support from the Left parties, called on Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar for the third time at the Lok Bhavan in Chennai on Friday hoping to form a government.

According to Marxist leader and former CPI (M) state secretary K Balakrishnan, besides the two Left parties, VCK and IUML "have also given letters," indicating they too have extended support to TVK, which originally lacked numbers to form government. He claimed Vijay is "being invited" by the Arlekar to form government and that he will be sworn-in on Saturday morning. However, there was no official confirmation from the Governor's office at the time of publishing.

The Vijay-led Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), with 108 seats but 10 short of a majority initially, had earlier reached out to CPI, CPI (M) and the VCK - all DMK allies, seeking their support to form government after winning its maiden Assembly election in Tamil Nadu which was held on 23 April. All three have two MLAs each in the 234-member House. The Congress, which won five seats, also pledged its support.

The CPI and CPI (M) extended support to Vijay on Friday, while VCK will announce its decision on Saturday. Vijay visited the offices of the Left parties and thanked them for their support, before going to the Governor's office.

TVK Chief VIjay meets Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar at the Lok Bhavan in Chennai for the third time, on Friday —PTI

> **It is... the most important duty of democracy that a new government must be formed. On behalf the DMK, I urge the Governor to take immediate action in accordance with the Constitution** -MK Stalin, outgoing Tamil Nadu Chief Minister

Left parties said that they will support the TVK form government but also continue their "journey" with the DMK.

As per the calculations, the strength of TVK and its supporting MLAs now stands at 116, including the requirement of Vijay resigning from one of the two seats he contested from - Perambur in Chennai and Tiruchirappalli East. He needs 118 seats to form a government.

The TVK has offered the Congress two ministers and one Rajya Sabha MP post, said TNCC President K Selvaperunthagai.

He said that the alliance with the TVK is not merely for the current government formation but is intended to continue through local body elections and the Parliamentary elections.

The Congress was also a part of the DMK-led SDA alliance. —PTI

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GBA polls likely between 14 and 24 June, says SEC

BENGALURU, 8 MAY

State Election Commissioner G.S. Sangreshi on Friday said elections to the five city corporations under the Greater Bengaluru Authority are likely to be held between June 14 and 24, with the exact date to be announced in a week.

He said the power to postpone the polls lies with the Supreme Court, which has directed the Karnataka government and the State Election Commission to complete the exercise by 30 June.

The SEC held a consultation with GBA Chief Commissioner M. Maheshwar Rao and civic commissioners. "I informed GBA officials that only the election date has to be fixed, as all other measures have been completed," Sangreshi said.

"They requested consideration of rains, exams, census work, SIR, and manpower shortages... I do not have the power to postpone the elections," he added.

He said the Supreme Court's order remains binding, and preparations are underway, with the matter of manpower shortage pending before the court. —PTI

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Invalid: Court strikes down Trump's 10% global tariffs

WASHINGTON, 8 MAY

In another setback to the White House, a US federal court has struck down the 10 per cent global tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump, calling them "invalid" and "unauthorised by law".

The tariffs were imposed on all countries, including India, on 24 February for 150 days following a Supreme Court verdict that struck down earlier sweeping levies, ruling that the International Emergency Economic Powers Act does not authorise duties.

In a split verdict, the Court of International Trade on Thursday ruled that provisions of the Trade Act of 1974, invoked by Trump, apply only in case of a balance of payments crisis.

Judges Mark A Barnett and Claire R Kelly said that if the President can select sub-accounts to identify a deficit, he could always claim one.

"Such an expansive reading of the statute" would give Trump unlimited tariff powers belonging to Congress, they said. Judge Timothy C Stanceu dissented. The ruling applied to Washington and two firms — Burlap & Barrel and Basic Fun! The government is expected to appeal.

India and the US had agreed on an interim trade deal framework in February, now being re-negotiated after the Supreme Court ruling. —PTI

>>>More on Pages 6, 7

2 Indian sailors were part of hantavirus-hit ship

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

At least two Indian nationals are part of the crew of the Dutch vessel MV Hondius which reported a hantavirus outbreak with five confirmed cases and three deaths so far, according to the BBC.

The luxury cruise ship, operated by Oceanwide Expeditions, began its journey on 1 April from Argentina's Ushuaia and is expected to arrive in Spain's Canary Islands on 10 May. About 150 passengers and crew from 28 countries were initially aboard the luxury cruise, but dozens disembarked on the island of St Helena on 24 April.

Of the 28 nationalities onboard, 38 are from the Philippines, 31 from the UK, 23 from the US, 16 from the Netherlands, 14 from Spain, nine from Germany, six from Canada, and two crew members from India, among others, the BBC reported.

Director of the ICMR's National Institute of Virology Dr Naveen Kumar said the cases appear to be isolated ones and there is no immediate public health threat to India.

He stressed that unlike Covid-19, hantavirus does not spread easily among people. —PTI

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State gears up for mega event marking BSY's 50yrs, Shah to attend

CHITRADURGA, 8 MAY

A mega event will be held in Chitradurga on Saturday to celebrate veteran BJP leader BS Yediyurappa's five-decade-long political journey. Union Home Minister Amit Shah is likely to in

Shah will felicitate the 83-year-old former chief minister at the event titled "BSY Abhimanotsava," which is expected to draw about 10 lakh people. Mega stages, seating arrangements, and food and drinking water facilities have been made for the event, along with necessary security arrangements.

A host of party leaders and Union Ministers, are expected to attend, which will also be graced by pontiffs of various mutts from across the State. Two books about the four-time chief minister will be released.

Senior BJP leader BS Yediyurappa arrives in Chitradurga ahead of the grand celebrations with his son BY Vijayendra and others —X @BYVIJAYENDRA

"Let us come together to express our love, respect, and admiration for the tireless, visionary leader of the people and farmers, the benevolent Yediyurappa," State BJP President BY Vijayendra posted on X.

Speaking to reporters in Davanagere, Yediyurappa recalled that he, late Ananthkumar, and a few other senior leaders, used to travel by bicycle to organise the party in its infancy. "Now, the time is approaching for change. Efforts will be made to strengthen the party." —PTI

>>>BSY, K'taka's saffron strength. Read on Pg 5

SC RAPS GOVT

SC ASKS CENTRE TO RESPOND ON AAP'S PLEA AGAINST SOCIAL MEDIA BLOCKING

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

The Supreme Court sought the Centre's response on a plea by the Gujarat unit of the Aam Aadmi Party challenging suspension of its social media accounts. Justices P.S. Narasimha and Alok Aradhe issued notice and tagged it with similar petitions. The plea questions Section 79(3)(b) of the IT Act and seeks to void related blocking notifications issued. —PTI

DECIDE ON PROSECUTING MP NETA FOR COL QURESHI REMARK: GOVT TOLD

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

"Enough is enough," the Supreme Court said Friday, asking the Madhya Pradesh government to decide on sanction to prosecute minister Kunwar Vijay Shah for remarks targeting Army officer Col Sofiya Qureshi after Operation Sindoor. CJI Surya Kant and Justice Bagchi termed the remarks "most unfortunate" and asked the state to comply with its January 19 direction within four weeks. —PTI

CHANGED TV FOREVER

Nature's beloved voice David Attenborough turns 100

LONDON, 8 MAY

One of the world's most famous wildlife presenter and climate campaigner just turned 100. David Attenborough helped generations understand not only how life evolved but, more importantly, why we have to protect it.

Through BBC programmes such as 'Life on Earth', 'The Private Life of Plants' and 'The Blue Planet', Attenborough has illuminated the beauty, ferocity and sometimes downright weirdness of nature in a hushed melodic voice that conveys his own awe at what he is witnessing.

Attenborough has taken viewers around the world. People who might never leave their hometowns were transported to the Himalayas, the Amazon and the unexplored forests of Papua New Guinea.

Born in London on 8 May, 1926, the same year as the late Queen Elizabeth II, David Attenborough was raised on the grounds of what is now the University of Leicester, where his father was a senior leader.

His fascination with wildlife began in childhood and went on to inspire millions. —PTI

>>> Read about his extraordinary life on Page 5

GBA polls likely between 14 and 24 June

Amid concerns about manpower shortage, SEC says SC order is binding

AAP workers hold protest at the Freedom Park in Bengaluru on Friday demanding that the state government hold GBA polls —*ED ASAD*

BENGALURU, 8 MAY

State Election Commissioner GS Sangreshi on Friday said the elections to the five city corporations under the GBA will be likely held between 14 and 24 June.

He said the exact date for the polls will be announced after a week, asserting that the power to postpone the elections, as requested by the Greater Bengaluru Authorities, lies with the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court had directed the Karnataka government and the State Election Commission (SEC) to conduct the local body elections by 30 June.

The SEC on Friday held a consultation meeting with the GBA Chief Commissioner M Maheshwar Rao and the Commissioners of the five city corporations regarding the election schedule.

"I informed GBA officials that only the election date has to be fixed, as all other measures and formalities for conducting the polls have already been completed," Sangreshi told reports after the meeting. "They requested the Commission to consider factors such as rains, exams, census work, SIR, and manpower shortages while fixing the date and sought additional time. I told them this meeting was not for seeking time... I do not have the power to postpone the elections as requested."

The Supreme Court has already given a "final opportunity," and both the SEC and the government must comply with its directions, Sangreshi said.

The matter regarding manpower shortages and other concerns raised by GBA officials during the meeting is already before the Supreme Court, and the State Election Commission has also filed a petition in this regard. The case is yet to be heard.

"Since the matter has not come up for hearing, the earlier order remains binding. Therefore, preparations are underway," he added.

The tenure of the previous elected body under the erstwhile BBMP ended on 10 September, 2020, and since then, a government-appointed administrator has been managing its day-to-day affairs. Bengaluru was divided into five municipal corporations —Central, East, West, North, and South—under the Greater Bengaluru Authority in September 2025.

Sangreshi had earlier said that elections to the five corporations would be conducted using ballot papers instead of EVMs as per the Congress government's recommendation. —*PTI*

Student killed, 45 injured as KSRTC bus topples

DAVANAGERE, 8 MAY

A college student was killed and 45 others were injured when a KSRTC bus in which they were travelling toppled here on Friday after the driver lost control of the vehicle, police said. The accident is said to have occurred after the rear axle of the bus broke and the driver lost control of the vehicle, a police officer said.

The bus was going from Davanagere to Honnali when the accident occurred near Marabanahalli in Channagiri taluk of the district. Basavapattana Police registered a case against the bus driver for causing death by negligence, and investigation is underway Following the accident, locals gathered at the spot and expressed anguish over the lack of sufficient KSRTC buses on the route. The situation was later brought under control, he said. The deceased, Darshan (23), a resident of Kundru village in Honnali taluk, was on his way to his college.

Most of the injured have suffered minor injuries and are being treated at a hospital in Davanagere.

Six others with grievous injuries are in Manipal Hospital. —*Salar News*

Speeding car mows down pedestrian on MG Road

BENGALURU, 8 MAY

A man was allegedly mowed down by a speeding car on MG Road in the heart of the City on early Friday morning, police said. The deceased Srinivas, in his late 50s, died on the spot in the accident that occurred at the Anil Kumble Circle here, they said.

Police said the accident occurred at around 4.30 am. Srinivas was walking along the side of the road when a car travelling at high speed allegedly hit him with immense force. The driver of the vehicle fled the spot. The impact was so severe that Srinivas died on the spot, a senior police officer said.

A case under Section 106 of BNS for causing death due to negligence has been registered, he said.

CCTV cameras installed in the area are being analysed to identify the vehicle that killed Srinivas, police said. —*PTI*

WHERE'S THE ROAD?
A newly laid road stands damaged at Rajajinagar 5th block, exposing the poor quality of road construction in Bengaluru. —Salar

Nine to be booked for axing 42 Acacia trees

SHIVAMOGGA, 8 MAY

The Forest Department is set to register an FIR against nine suspects for allegedly cutting 42 Acacia trees grown a social forestry zone in Malve village, Shivamogga district.

The incident reportedly took place on Monday, while villagers alerted the department on Tuesday. Forest officials subsequently visited the site and began an investigation.

Deputy Conservator of Forests (DCF), Sagar subdivision, MD Fayazuddin, said at a press conference on Friday that preliminary investigation has revealed that nearly 42 hybrid acacia trees were felled illegally.

Fayazuddin said a case has already been registered through the Garudakshi monitoring system and warned that strict legal action would be taken against all those found involved.

The DCF said owners of an adjacent property have claimed that they had planted and nurtured the trees and that the land falls within their property limits.

In response, the Forest Department has issued notices seeking relevant land records and documents. Further action will be taken after verification of the documents submitted, he added.

The Department is also probing whether any Forest Department Officials or staff were negligent or complicit in the incident and a report will be submitted in three days by an inquiry officer.

The Deputy Conservator of Forests said that a special team has been constituted to inspect timber depots in the region and verify if any timber stock linked to the incident has been sold there, adding that timber depot owners in Sagar and Soraba regions cannot accept wood without valid permits. —*Salar News*

ACTIVISTS ASK CM TO HALT UNDEMOCRATIC SIR PROCESS

BENGALURU, 8 MAY

A group of activists opposing the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday, and urged immediate steps to protect voters' rights and halt the process, which they termed "undemocratic and unscientific" and one that "pushes out" voters."The Election Commission of India has lost all credibility. It is being accused of political bias," the alliance said, adding that many were also disappointed with the Supreme Court.

Retired IAS officer SG Devasahayam, analysts Parakala Prabhakar and Nikhil Dey, former minister BT Lalitha Naik and activist Thomas Franco were among those present. Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and Ministers Priyank Kharge and Santosh Lad also attended the meeting. They said SIR must be reviewed, and that the Supreme Court hearing on its validity should conclude first.

"The government should ensure transparency," they said. They sought a six-month revision period, voter assistance centres, support for documentation, public scrutiny of draft rolls, and time for appeals, urging a "self-sufficient voters' list" through social auditing. —*PTI*

Muslim groups to release govt's 'report card'

BENGALURU, 8 MAY

Various Muslim organisations in the State on Friday said they will organise a convention on 16 May and release a report titled 'What Did the Congress Government Say? What Did It Do? What Next?"

No politicians will be invited to the 'Karnataka Muslim Convention', they said. The report on the three-year functioning of the Congress government will be submitted to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, Ministers, and MLAs after its release.

This was decided at a meeting of major Muslim organisations, associations, Ulema organisations, federations, and representatives of the ad hoc committee of the Karnataka Rajya Muslim Okkoota held on Wednesday, where serious dissatisfaction was reportedly expressed over the manner in which the Congress government has treated Muslims.

Maulana Zainul, Mufti Qasimi, Qari Zulfiqar Ahmed Noori Imam O Khateeb, and Maulana Nadvi addressing reporters—*MOHAMMED ASAD*

"During the meeting, a detailed report prepared by members of the KRMO ad hoc committee's report preparation team and experts from various fields was presented," it said. "The report covered the three-year functioning of the Congress government, the promises made to Muslims on ten key issues, the extent to which those promises were fulfilled or remain unfulfilled, alleged discrimination faced by Muslims in representation under the Congress government, and the community's demands before the government," a statement said. Suggestions and recommendations were received from all participants regarding various issues mentioned in the report, such as the hijab ban, reservation, hate speech and hate crimes, budget allocation, political representation, the Waqf issue, the cow slaughter prohibition law, the anti-conversion law, and scholarships.

The release said participants also expressed the opinion that if the Karnataka government continue the manner in which it is treating Muslims, the community should keep its options open. —*PTI*

Belagavi cops ban 18 rowdy sheeters from entering district

BELAGAVI, 8 MAY

Belagavi district police have issued externment orders against 18 rowdy-sheeters involved in anti-social and criminal activities to maintain peace and law and order.

Addressing a press conference, Superintendent of Police K. Ramrajan said this was the first time such a large number of habitual offenders had been externed at once. "This decision has been taken in the interest of public safety. Strict action will be taken against anyone disturbing public peace or taking the law into their own hands," he said.

Police said the district administration prepared a list of individuals allegedly involved in repeated offences and acts disturbing public harmony. Based on this, externment orders were issued.

The externed persons will not be allowed to enter district limits for a specified period, and violations will invite arrest and imprisonment.

Officials said the accused were involved in serious offences such as attempt to murder, assault, intimidation and extortion. The move aims to prevent incidents during upcoming festivals and boost public confidence.

Those externed include Gangappa Nayik, Sanju Mestri, Sagar Khanapur, Pascal Muthuswamy, Dastagirsab Navalagi, Hanumant Madar, Neelkanth Manavadkar, Saif Ali Nagarji, Praveen Chougale, Chandrakant Vaddar, Sachin Choudakkanavar, Ladjisaab Multani, Paresh Nashipudi, Deepak Kelagade, Kumar Bendigeri, Chetan Naykar, Huseinsab Bilagi and Churachappa Ghatnoor.

Police reiterated that action against anti-social elements will continue. —*Salar News*

Ballari SP's gunman held for extorting ₹3 lakh from detained rice smuggler

BALLARI, 8 MAY

In a shocking development, police have arrested Devaraj, the gunman of Ballari Superintendent of Police (SP) Suman Pennekar, along with an accomplice, for allegedly extorting Rs 3 lakh. The incident involves a policeman himself involved in illegal activities. The case emerged after Sharabhayya, an alleged illegal rice transporter, was travelling with two lorries loaded with rice towards Andhra Pradesh when they were intercepted.

Devaraj and his team allegedly identified themselves as members of the "SP Squad" and demanded money. According to the complaint, the accused initially demanded Rs 5 lakh, but after negotiations, settled for Rs 3 lakh, which was extorted from Sharabhayya. Feeling distressed, Sharabhayya approached Moka Police Station to lodge a complaint, stating that the accused threatened to seize his lorries and send him to jail if he failed to pay.

Police registered a case and arrested Devaraj and Sai Ram on 7 May. SP Pennekar confirmed, "Devaraj was serving as the SP's gunman and has now been suspended." The seized money and vehicle have been recovered, and investigation is going. —*Salar*

ORDER SUBJECT TO SC STAND

'Transwomen can continue hormone therapy'

BENGALURU, 8 MAY

The Karnataka High Court upheld transgender women's right on Thursday, directing medical professionals to continue the ongoing hormone replacement therapy (HRT) for two transgender women. The decision comes in the wake of the Transgender Persons Amendment Act passed earli-er this year by the Centre.

However, the HC said that the direction would be subject to orders passed by the Supreme Court in a plea challenging the validity of the Amendment Act. Senior Advocate Jayna Kothari, appearing for the petitioners, argued that after the passing of the 2026

Amendment Act, doctors were apprehensive about prescribing the required medicines, thus making it difficult for the petitioners to continue HRT. She contended that this violates women's fundamental rights under Articles 14 and 21. Additional Solicitor General Arvind Kamath, appearing for the Central government, had submitted that no one had prevented the petitioners from taking pills and that no evidence of coercive action against them was presented.

The transgender women had approached the High Court to challenge the amendment's definition of 'transgender', which revokes recognition of gender self-identity.

This goes against principles laid down by the Supreme Court in 2014, which specifically cited Articles 14 — the State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws — and Article 21 — no person shall be deprived of his life or liberty. —*Agencies*

— PTI

Judge quits SIR tribunal post Cong candidate's win

KOLKATA, 8 MAY

Former Calcutta High Court Chief Justice TS Sivagnanam on Friday said he has resigned from the tribunal, which was hearing appeals challenging the exclusion of names from the electoral rolls following the SIR exercise. He is one of 19 former judges appointed by the Election Commission on the direction of the Supreme Court to hear appeals arising from decisions of judicial officers regarding the deletions of names from the electoral rolls. Among his most significant orders in the appeals was the inclusion in the electoral rolls of the name of Motab Shaikh, a Congress candidate who later went on to win the election from Farakka. Motab Shaikh's name had been deleted from the electoral rolls during the SIR process. —*PTI*

2 third-gender candidates fought 2026 polls

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

Not a single third-gender candidate won a seat in the recently-concluded assembly elections held across five states and a Union Territory, with only two contesting, one each in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, according to Election Commission data. A similar trend was seen in the 2021 Kerala and Tamil Nadu assembly elections, Kerala had one candidate and Tamil Nadu two, but all lost. Former chief election commissioner (CEC) Navin Chawla had pushed for allowing third gender persons to register themselves as voters in 'Others' or 'O' category, which is now the norm as EC identifies voters as 'Male', 'Female' and 'Others' or third gender. —*PTI*

Manipur BJP leader quits party, says people ignored

IMPHAL, 8 MAY

Manipur BJP leader Elangbam Johnson quit the saffron party on Friday, citing the state government's "failure" to honour the aspirations of the people. Elangbam, who fought the 2022 assembly elections on a BJP ticket, told reporters he gave up the party's state spokesperson post. "Since May 3, 2023, we have been unable to go in the direction of the people's wishes. After discussion with my workers in Keisamthong, I have decided to quit the BJP. I am tendering my resignation from the state spokesperson post and giving up party membership," he said. The government's "failure" to honour the people's aspirations since the ethnic conflict broke out in Manipur is the main reason behind the resignation, Elangbam added. More than 260 people died in Meiteis -Kuki-Zo fights so far.—*PTI*

Tharoor moves Delhi HC against deepfake videos

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor has filed a petition in the Delhi High Court against the publication of AI-generated deepfake videos allegedly showing him praising Pakistan and discussing sensitive political issues. Justice Mini Pushkarna issued summons to X, Meta, and the Centre, indicating she would pass an interim order in Tharoor's favour. Senior advocate Amit Sibal, representing Tharoor, stated that unknown entities repeatedly uploaded fake videos misusing his face and voice, which need to be taken down. He argued the videos damage Tharoor's reputation as a patriot and External Affairs Committee chairperson. Sibal warned the videos could harm India and be misused.—*PTI*

LEFT SHOWGROUND TO SAFFRON CORONATION

BRIGADE PREPS FOR BENGAL RESET

KOLKATA, 8 MAY

Long before television studios began decoding electoral optics and social media turned politics into a spectacle, Bengal measured political strength through human tides surging into the Brigade Parade Ground.

Since 1950s, the sprawling field beside the iconic Victoria Memorial has witnessed international political luminaries such as Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez.

The Brigade Parade Ground that once symbolised the might of the Left Front, hosted anti-Congress mobilisations and later became the stage for Mamata Banerjee, is now preparing to host the swearing-in ceremony of Bengal's first BJP government. By Saturday evening, when the BJP leadership takes oath, another chapter will be added to Brigade's crowded political folklore.

The symbolism is unmistakable. From late 1970s onward, the CPI(M) transformed the once military parade ground of the British into the epicentre of Bengal's street politics. Massive annual rallies routinely turned the Maidan into a sea of red flags, reinforcing the aura of a party that would srule the state for 34 years.

Preparations are underway at the Brigade Parade Ground beside the iconic Victoria Memorial ahead of the swearing-in ceremony of the new West Bengal government, in Kolkata on Friday —*PTI*

For decades, crowd size at Brigade became political currency. The fuller the ground, the stronger the message.

But Brigade's memory stretches far beyond the Left years.

In 1955, Soviet leaders Nikita Khrushchev and Nikolai Bulganin received a massive public reception at the centre of India's socialist imagination.

Years later, after the birth of Bangladesh, former prime minister Indira Gandhi shared the Brigade stage with Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as cries of "Jai Bangla" and "Jai Hind" echoed.

In 1984, opposition heavyweights such as Jyoti Basu, NT Rama Rao and Farooq Abdullah gathered here for a major anti-Congress conclave. In 2005, Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez addressed a Left Front rally.

Decades later, in January 2019, Mamata Banerjee assembled an array of opposition leaders in a high-voltage anti-BJP rally projected as a rehearsal for national opposition unity.

And now, in one of Bengal politics' recurring ironies, the BJP — once electorally marginal in the state — is preparing to convert the same ground into the ceremonial gateway to power.

The transition took shape months earlier when Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed a massive rally at Brigade on 14 March, before the polls was announced.

The BJP dubbed it the launchpad of its "Paribartan Yatra". Saturday's oath-taking is expected to transform that campaign slogan into a moment of political arrival.

Party organisers expect close to one lakh attendees guarded by nearly 4,000 police personnel. The organisers are also attempting to wrap the ceremony in distinctly Bengali cultural imagery.

It is being decorated with Dakshineswar temple-style installations and Sundarbans-themed structures. Folk traditions such as chhau, baul and gambhira performances are expected, while stalls selling jhalmuri, rasagolla and sandesh aim to portray a Bengali public festival.

Portraits of Rabindranath Tagore, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay and other Bengali icons are also being put up.

In Bengal, governments change, ideologies mutate and slogans fade with time. Yet every political force seeking permanence eventually returns to the Maidan - searching not merely for a crowd, but for history's approval. —*PTI*

Infiltration, cattle smuggling now impossible: Shah

KOLKATA, 8 MAY

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday asserted that infiltration and cattle smuggling would become "impossible" in West Bengal after he announced Suvendu Adhikari's election as the leader of the BJP legislature party and its chief ministerial face.

Addressing the BJP legislature party meeting, Shah said the landslide victory in Bengal was not merely an expansion of its organisation or validation of ideology but a mandate linked to national security and democratic restoration.

Launching a sharp attack on the outgoing TMC regime, Shah alleged that during Mamata Banerjee's 15-year rule, "politicisation of the administration and criminalisation of politics" had taken place in the state.

He expressed his gratitude to the people of Bengal. "The atmosphere that had been created here since the Communist era was further intensified under Mamata ji's rule. In such conditions, expressing one's vote had become almost impossible," he said. —*PTI*

TMC seeks CBI probe into violence

1KOLKATA, 8 MAY

Trinamool Congress leader Saugata Roy on Friday demanded a court-monitored CBI investigation into the killing of party workers and incidents of vandalism in post-poll violence in West Bengal.

Speaking to reporters, Roy said that many party leaders and workers have fallen victim to post-result violence.

Roy condemned the alleged murder Chandranath Rath in Madhyamgram and claimed that three other TMC workers were killed over the last three days. Rath, a close aide of BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari, was allegedly shot dead on Wednesday night.

Roy cited the killing of TMC worker Biswajit Pattanaik in Beleghata on 4 May, alleging that he was attacked in his house and his body was found outside the residence.

He alleged vandalism at party offices linked to state minister Arup Biswas in the Vijaygarh-

A Lenin statue being vandalised in Bengal —*CREDIT*

Netaji Nagar area and at the office of councillor Sushant Ghosh near Ruby Crossing.

Claiming that more than 2,000 TMC offices had been vandalised across the state, Roy alleged that party offices in several areas, including Tollygunge, Baruipur, Kamarhati, Baranagar, and Howrah were attacked, while offices in Jagatballavpur and Siliguri were set on fire.

Meanwhile, the Left Front held a protest rally here on Friday evening over alleged attacks on working people in several districts of West Bengal in the garb of victory celebrations by the BJP. It was held in the Esplanade area of the city's central district. —*PTI*

TMC issues notices to 5 spokespersons

TMC has issued show-cause notices to five of its spokespersons for allegedly making anti-party comments following its defeat, a source said on Friday. The notices -- served to Riju Dutta, Krishnendu Chowdhury, Kohinoor Majumdar, Papiya Ghosh and Kartik Ghosh -- asked why disciplinary action should not be taken against them for "violating party discipline."

The notice stated that if no reply is received in the stipulated time, the party will proceed with action. —*PTI*

SUVENDU AIDE KILLING: 2ND BIKE USED IN CRIME FOUND; SIT IN UP

KOLKATA, 8 MAY

Investigators on Friday recovered the second motorcycle allegedly used in the murder of **Chandranath Rath**, a close aide of senior BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari, even as the West Bengal Police intensified search for a car suspected to have been used in the crime, a senior officer said.

The second motorcycle, allegedly used in the crime, was seized near Rail Gate No. 11 in Barasat, around 6km from the North 24 Parganas district's Madhyamgram, where Adhikari's personal assistant was shot dead on Wednesday. Investigators had seized another motorcycle from near Gate No. 2.5 of the Kolkata airport area with fake registration number.

The owner of another car seized from the spot of crime in Madhyamgram claimed he received a call from a prospective buyer based in Uttar Pradesh. A seven-member Special Investigation Team (SIT), formed on Thursday left for Uttar Pradesh.

Police said surveillance has been intensified in border districts with vehicle checks being conducted, amid suspicion that some of the assailants might have fled towards neighbouring states. —*PTI*

AMMK denies supporting TVK

CHENNAI, 8 MAY

AMMK chief TTV Dhinakaran on Friday denied that his party had extended support to Vijay-led TVK and said it continues to remain in the NDA.

Dismissing reports in a section of the media that the party's lone MLA-designate, S Kamaraj, representing the Mannargudi Assembly constituency, had extended support to the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam, Dhinakaran said Kamaraj is currently staying at a resort in Puducherry along with the AIADMK's newly elected members.

The Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam general secretary said on 'X' that his party is firm in its stance of continuing in the National Democratic Alliance.

No need for guv: DMK leader Kanimozhi

Senior DMK leader Kanimozhi Karunanidhi on Friday reiterated her party's opposition to the office of the governor amid uncertainty over government formation in Tamil Nadu after a fractured election mandate.

Speaking to PTI Videos, Kanimozhi emphasised that the DMK's demand for the abolition of the governor's post remained unchanged, especially as questions arise over constitutional propriety during the current political transition.

When asked about the governor's actions following the election results, top DMK leader Kanimozhi pointed to what she described as the "inherent friction" between the office of the governor and the political interests of the state of Tamil Nadu. —*PTI*

Kerala CM race spills onto streets

T'PURAM, 8 MAY

With the ball now in the Congress high command's court to decide the next Chief Minister of Kerala, supporters of the key contenders VD Satheesan, KC Venugopal and Ramesh Chennithala have hit the streets and social media platforms.

On Thursday, when AICC observers Mukul Wasnik and Ajay Maken arrived to attend the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) meeting and hold individual discussions with the party's 63 MLAs, six flex boards were installed near Indira Bhavan supporting MP KC Venugopal, who did not contest the Kerala Assembly election.

On one of Venugopal's flex boards in Thiruvananthapuram, grease was allegedly poured on Thursday. On the other hand, demonstrations were held supporting VD Satheesan in various parts of the state.

Posters opposing Venugopal and supporting Satheesan appeared in Alappuzha and in Irikkur in Kannur district.

Supporters of Congress leader VD Satheesan march demanding that Satheesan be elected the next CM, in Thiruvananthapuram, Friday —*PTI*

Even though Ramesh Chennithala is far behind in the flex board war, he has supporters on social media who are vehemently demanding that he be the Chief Minister.

Although there are reports that Venugopal enjoys majority support among Congress MLAs, party leaders have not made any direct statements.

With the CLP resolution authorising the AICC president to decide the CLP leader, who will also become the Chief Minister, the triangular contest is likely to extend to party headquarters.

The observers are expected to submit a report to the AICC on Friday, and leaders from Kerala are likely to be called to the party headquarters for final discussions. — *PTI*

Cong MLA says his CM choice was deleted

Uduma MLA K Neelakandan said on Friday that he had filed a complaint with AICC observers alleging that his preference for the CM's post was not recorded after the CLP meeting. His response came after a daily published a photograph showing a list allegedly held by AICC observer Mukul Wasnik after the meeting. The list reportedly contained names of Congress MLAs and a column indicating their CM preferences. —*PTI*

TUSSLE TO COME TO POWER

'Cong broke up as DMK planned to align with AIADMK'

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

Amid hectic talks over government formation in Tamil Nadu, Congress leader Manickam Tagore on Friday took potshots at those criticising his party for supporting the TVK, saying it has been anti-BJP from day one and the Congress has stood with that.

Tagore justified the Congress support to the TVK to "respect the people's mandate" in forming a stable government and to keep the NDA out of power in the southern state.

"RG called Stalin. RG called Mamata. On result day itself. Next morning — RG backed Mamata publicly. Said BJP stole 100 seats in Bengal. Congress supported TVK — to respect the people's mandate, to form a stable government, to keep NDA OUT.

"And now — Godi media blames Congress. Pro-DMK media blames Congress. But DMK is talking to AIADMK. With BJP's blessings. That's practically NDA by another name. So tell me, should Congress have helped NDA come to power?!" Tagore said in a post on X.

The MP from Virudhunagar in Tamil Nadu is also the Congress whip in the Lok Sabha.

Meanwhile, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge spoke to CPI general secretary D Raja and urged his party to support the TVK for the formation of a secular government in Tamil Nadu, sources said. —*PTI*

Manickam Tagore —*PTI*

DMK seeks change of seats for its MPs in LS

The DMK on Friday sought a change in seating arrangement for its MPs in the Lok Sabha, saying their alliance with the Congress has ended and it would not be appropriate for its members to sit alongside those of the Congress. DMK leader Kanimozhi Karunanidhi wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla for changing the seating arrangement in view of the changed political circumstances. "In view of the changed political circumstances and as our alliance with the Indian National Congress has come to an end, it may not be appropriate for our Members to continue occupying the present seating arrangement alongside them in the House," the Toothukkudi MP said in her letter to Birla. —*PTI*

— ANI

Two threaten train passengers with gun in J'khand

RANCHI, 8 MAY

Two men were detained for allegedly terrorising train passengers with a country-made pistol, an officer reported on Friday. They were arrested on Thursday from the general coach of the Howrah-Hatia Kriya Yoga Express. The suspects are involved in illegal arms supply and had gone to Mango, Tata Nagar, to collect an illegal arms consignment meant for Ranchi. Due to their delay, they boarded the train without the delivery. An alert woman passenger told RPF staff that one had brandished a pistol and threatened others, while his accomplice used abusive language. The RPF apprehended both after arriving at Ranchi station. A pistol and cartridge were seized. The accused, Akeeb Khan, 21, and Rehan Khan, 20, from Bariyatu, face multiple criminal cases.—*PTI*

Jaipur hospitals on strike over threats to jailed doc's kin

JAIPUR, 8 MAY

Private hospitals and doctors in Jaipur launched an indefinite strike, suspending OPD, IPD, and emergency services, over alleged threats to a jailed doctor's family. Medical organisations, including the Indian Medical Association (IMA), Jaipur branch, announced the boycott on Thursday night, citing fear and anger among doctors across Rajasthan. The protest followed an incident during a bail hearing of Sondev Bansal in the Rajasthan High Court, where lawyers allegedly raised slogans and caused a commotion, leading to the case's adjournment. Doctors claimed Bansal's father and brother were threatened, abused, and assaulted after the hearing. The protests demanded justice for Bansal, and action against the disruptors. —*PTI*

Teen girl fights off crocodile in UP, injured but safe

ALIGARH, 8 MAY

A 19-year-old girl fought off a crocodile and freed her hand from its jaws, sustaining injuries. The incident occurred on Thursday near Atrauli, on the banks of the Kali River, a tributary of the Ganga, near Aligarh and Bulandshahr districts. Suman was cutting grass when the crocodile grabbed her right hand. She shouted for help and punched the reptile in the eyes with her left hand. Her aunt struck the crocodile with a sickle, injuring it, which made it to release Suman. She was referred to Deen Dayal District Hospital; her injuries are serious but she is out of danger.—*PTI*

— PTI

Large cache of weapons, ammo seized in Manipur

IMPHAL, 8 MAY

Authorities recovered a substantial cache of arms, ammunition, and explosives in Manipur's Senapati and Churachandpur districts. On Thursday, joint forces including Assam Rifles, Manipur Police, and CRPF raided the Maranmei hill range and seized 15 weapons and large quantities of ammunition. The weapons included an AK-47 with a magazine, an MP-5, .303, two .22 rifles, four locally made bolt-action rifles, three .32 pistols, two .22 pistols, and a locally made shotgun. Over 70 rounds of various calibres were recovered. Security officials said the haul was a major blow to illegal arms networks and would deter insurgent activities. —*PTI*

SC unhappy over Lakhimpur Kheri trial

SC sore over no show of witnesses; ex-BJP minister's son allegedly killed 8

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

The Supreme Court expressed disappointment over the non-production of witnesses in the trial of Ashish Mishra, the son of former Union minister Ajay Mishra, and others in the 2021 Lakhimpur Kheri violence case.

Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi said the status report filed before it by the Uttar Pradesh government has not assigned any reason whatsoever for the non-production of witnesses. It noted that no witnesses have been examined during the trial in the last two months.

It asked the trial judge to finish the trial in a time-bound manner, and to file a status report before it. The trials in two cases related to the incident are going on before a court in Uttar Pradesh.

Ashish Mishra and other accused in the Lakhimpur Kheri violence case, being produced in a court in Lakhimpur on 22 October 2021—*PTI*

Senior advocate Siddharth Dave, appearing for Ashish Mishra, said that as per the latest status report filed by Uttar Pradesh, 44 witnesses have been examined so far in the first FIR. "No witnesses have been examined in the last two months," Dave said.

He argued that the last status report filed by the state in March also said that 44 witnesses had been examined.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for the relatives of the farmers who were allegedly mowed down in the incident, said the SC will have to do something regarding the manner in which the trial was going on. The bench posted the next hearing in the Lakhimpur Kheri violence case to July.

On 3 October 2021, eight people, including four farmers, were killed in Tikunia in Lakhimpur Kheri district during a protest by farmers against Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya's visit to the area. Four farmers were mowed down by a sports utility vehicle. A driver and two BJP workers were then allegedly lynched by angry farmers. A journalist also died in the violence. — *PTI*

Noida violence: SC asks student to approach HC

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

The SC refused bail to a student accused of inciting violence during the industrial workers' protest in Noida on 13 April.

Justices BV Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan asked the counsel appearing for Aakriti Chaudhary on Friday to approach the Allahabad High Court.

Chaudhary's counsel submitted that the grounds of arrest were not given by the police to the accused and sought bail. He told the SC that Chaudhary is a student of Delhi University.

The SC also issued notice to police officials on a plea filed by one Keshaw Anand alleging torture by the UP police.

A court had earlier allowed conditional police remand of Aakriti Chaudhary, Manisha Chauhan and Srishti Gupta, accused of inciting violence during the industrial workers' protest on 13 April. — *PTI*

CJI recalls how a judge helped his career

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

CJI Surya Kant shared an anecdote when as a young lawyer he was rebuked by a high court judge for aspiring to become a judicial officer.

The story came when a judicial services aspirant was seeking revaluation of an examination paper.

Although the plea of Prerna Gupta was dismissed by the CJI and Justice Joymalya Bagchi, she left the court smiling. As Gupta pressed her case, the CJI recounted how he too wanted to become a judicial officer.

"By the time the results came, the procedure had changed. Earlier, the PSC used to conduct the selection. Then a Supreme Court judgment came as per which HC judges have to act as subject experts, and their opinion would be binding on the commission," he said.

The CJI recalled that the senior-most judge on the interview panel happened to be the judge before whom he had recently argued two cases.

"One day, he called me into his chamber and asked, 'Do you want to become a judicial officer?' I said yes. He immediately said, 'Get out from my chamber.'"

"I thought that my career was over," the CJI said. However, the next day the judge summoned him again. "He said, 'If you want to become (a judge), you are welcome. But my advice is, don't become a judge," Justice Kant recalled. The CJI said he chose to dedicate himself to his practice.

Prerna Gupta, who had come seeking a legal remedy, left with a smile. — *PTI*

Meteorologists warn that this is not an isolated event but part of a broader phenomenon —*PTI*

Rain in half of India; heatwave in the other half

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

- The IMD has forecast thunderstorms, heavy rain and gusty winds in many areas in the next few days, while a heatwave is likely in western India

Delhi residents woke up to pleasant weather on Friday as temperatures stayed below normal in the morning. After light showers in recent days, the mercury came down.

The IMD has forecast widespread thunderstorms, heavy rainfall and gusty winds in several parts of the country in the next few days, while heat wave conditions are likely in western India.

Another wet spell is expected in Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and east Rajasthan between 11 and 13 May.Thunderstorms and gusty winds is likely over Assam and Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura during the next few days. Heavy rainfall has been forecast over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya on 12 and 13 May.

The IMD also forecast thunderstorms and gusty winds over Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand and West Bengal.

Thunderstorms are likely over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal, Kerala and Mahe, Lakshadweep, Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh in the next four to five days. Isolated heatwaves are likely Gujarat and west Rajasthan between 9 and 13 May.

Meanwhile, the APSDMA on Friday forecast more light rains accompanied by thunderstorms in the next two days in Andhra Pradesh. The Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (APSDMA), said the southeasterly and southwesterly winds in the lower tropospheric are expected to trigger isolated rainfall in many districts on Friday and Saturday.

Jain advised farmers and labourers not to take shelter under trees during thunderstorms. — Agencies

Aspiring teachers protest recruitment delay in Patna

PATNA, 8 MAY

A large number of teaching job aspirants held a demonstration in Patna on Friday, protesting the delay in notifying the date for the BPSC TRE 4.0 exam.

The candidates started their march from Patna College and were heading towards Dak Bungalow Chowraha, when they were stopped by the police near Gandhi Maidan.

"Mild force was used to disperse protestors as they were trying to break the barricade," SP (Central) Diksha said.

The protesters alleged that the police baton-charged them indiscriminately.

The Bihar Public Service Commission Teacher Recruitment Exam (TRE) 4 to fill around 46,000 posts was expected to be notified in April 2026, the protesters said.

Education Minister Mithilesh Tiwari, who assumed charge during the day, said all pending recruiments, including through BPSC TRE-4, will be completed soon.

"There will be no more pending recruitments. Under the leadership of CM Samrat Choudhary, I will strive to ensure that the education sector emerges as a robust foundation of Bihar's overall development," he told reporters.

Teacher post hopefuls protest demanding the release of the Bihar PSC's Teacher Recruitment Exam (TRE) notification in Patna on Friday—*PTI*

Student leader Dilip Kumar, who led the protest march, accused former education minister Sunil Kumar of giving false assurances to candidates. He expressed hope that Tiwari would resolve the issue promptly. — *PTI*

Ex-IPS officer's wife killed in Hyd, help suspected

HYDERABAD, 8 MAY

The wife of retired IPS officer Vinay Ranjan Ray was allegedly killed by a Nepali gang with the help of a domestic help here in the wee hours of Friday, police said.

Tanuja, 62, was murdered at around 2 am. Her body was found on the first floor of the multi-storey building, in the Prashasan Nagar area of Jubilee Hills. Ray, a DG rank officer who retired from the Andhra Pradesh cadre, was out of station, and their children were on the upper floor, police said.

The culprits smothered Tanuja to death and decamped with valuables.

Police Commissioner VC Sajjanar, who inspected the scene, said a Nepali gang is suspected for the murder. "Some clues have been found. Based on it, police teams are working," he said.

The gang committed the offence in collusion with a woman domestic help in the house, Sajjanar said. — *PTI*

2 HELD FOR SEXUALLY ASSAULTING WOMAN AT KNIFEPOINT IN KOCHI

KOCHI, 8 MAY

Two persons were arrested after a three-member gang allegedly sexually assaulted a woman at knifepoint near Ernakulam Junction Railway Station, officials said on Friday. The arrested suspects are Danish, 26, a native of Varkala in Thiruvananthapuram district, and Rahul, 39, a native of Paravoor in Kollam district.

Police officials said they were searching for the prime accused, Sanjay, a native of Aroor in Alappuzha district.

Police said the incident occurred on the night of 5 May when the victim was chatting with her friend near a closed hotel near Ernakulam Junction Railway station.

- Police said the incident occurred on the night of 5 May when the victim was chatting with her friend near a closed hotel near the Ernakulam Junction Railway Station

Officials said the suspects approached them, attacked the victim's friend and then allegedly threatened the woman with a knife and sexually assaulted her.

Police said the accused also allegedly disrobed the victim during the attack. However, the woman managed to escape and approached a nearby shop for help.

Police were informed immediately and the victim was taken to the police station.

Officials said the suspects were heavily drunk at the time of the incident and went hiding soon after the attack.

Police registered a case on 6 May with charges of rape, disrobing a woman, criminal intimidation and robbery.

The two suspects were later arrested in the city, while efforts are continuing to trace Sanjay, police said. The suspects were produced in court and were remanded to judicial custody. — *PTI*

MADE IN INDIA 'TARA'

India conducts maiden trial of new weapon system

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

India has successfully carried out the maiden flight of an indigenously developed glide weapon system off Odisha.

The Tactical Advanced Range Augmentation (TARA) system, developed to convert unguided warheads into precision guided weapons, was tested on Thursday, the defence ministry said.

"The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Indian Air Force (IAF) successfully conducted the maiden flight-trial of TARA off the coast of Odisha," it said.

It said TARA is India's first indigenous glide weapon system to convert unguided warheads into precision guided weapons.

The weapon system has been designed and developed by the Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad along with other DRDO laboratories to enhance the lethality and accuracy of a low-cost weapon to neutralise ground-based targets, the ministry said in a statement.

TARA is the first glide weapon to utilise state-of-the-art low-cost systems. It was designed and developed by Research Centre Imarat (RCI)—*DRDO*

It is the first glide weapon to utilise state-of-the-art low-cost systems, it added.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated DRDO, the Indian Air Force and the industry partners involved in the project for the maiden flight-trial of the weapon system. He described it as a significant development in advancing India's indigenous defence capabilities. — *PTI*

AIMIM corporator sheltered TCS case suspect Nida: Cops

MUMBAI, 8 MAY

An AIMIM corporator allegedly harboured Nida Khan, an accused in the alleged sexual harassment and religious coercion case at the Nashik TCS centre, and her family in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, police said on Friday.

The Nashik police said that questioning of Matin Patel, an AIMIM corporator led to Nida Khan's arrest on Thursday. Patel has been named as an accused in the case for providing refuge to Khan, 27, a key suspect in the religious coercion and sexual harassment racket involving nine female employees. Khan was apprehended from the Naregaon area of Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar on Thursday, Nashik Police Commissioner Sandeep Karnik said.

He said that Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar police commissioner Pravin Pawar and his team helped the Nashik police. Karnik said that the Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar police tracked Khan's location to the city.

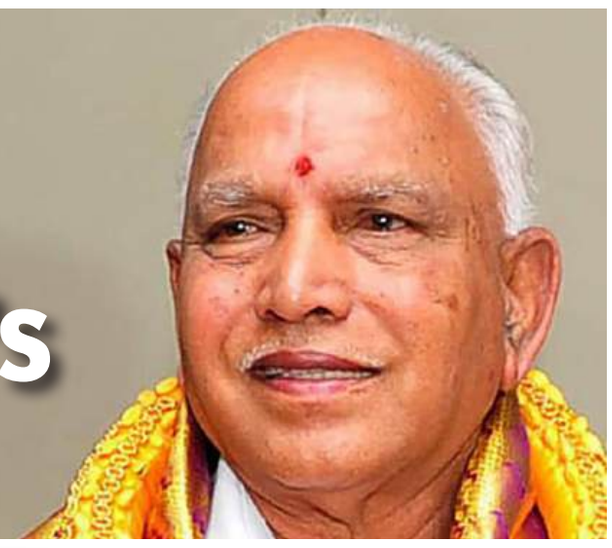
The Nashik police said that questioning of Matin Patel, an AIMIM corporator led to Nida Khan's arrest on Thursday —*ANI*

City police chief Pawar called Patel and some others for reviewing the security provided to them during civic body elections, a senior official said. When Patel reached the police's security branch, Pawar interrogated him, and he disclosed Khan and her family's location, the official said.

The police from both cities then conducted searches at a house in the Naregaon area and nabbed Khan, he said.

Khan's father, Ejaj Bashir, 52, mother Nilofar Ejaj, 44, brother Mohammad Ejaj, 20, and aunt Noorjehan Sheikh Ali, 44, were also with her, the official said. — *PTI*

BSY clocks 5 decades as Karnataka's saffron force



SHREEVALLI KRISHNA

BS Yediyurappa is an unparalleled leader who carried the Bharatiya Janata Party to every village in Karnataka and elevated the lotus symbol to the seat of power. His journey, which began as an ordinary worker of the Sangh, transformed him into a symbol of trust for millions of party workers. No one can deny that if the BJP stands today as a powerful force in Karnataka politics, it is because of Yediyurappa's decades of struggle, organisational strength, and unwavering leadership.

A journey that began in a village

Born in the small village of Bookanakere in KR Pete taluk of Mandya district, Yediyurappa closely witnessed the hardships of rural life. Having grown up in a farming family, the pain and struggles of farmers were not merely political issues for him — they were personal life experiences. From childhood, he embraced the values of discipline, hard work, and patriotism. As a young man, he became involved in the activities of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). At that time, his field of work was Shikaripura in Shivamogga district, and it was there that the foundation of his public life was laid.

The leader who rooted BJP in Karnataka

Entering politics as an ordinary worker, Yediyurappa gradually earned the trust of the people. Struggle was the core principle of his politics. At one time, establishing the BJP in rural Karnataka was considered nearly impossible. During a period when the party was struggling for survival amid the dominance of Congress and regional parties, Yediyurappa tirelessly worked to strengthen the party organisation across every corner of the state. Village meetings, constant interaction with party workers, and responsiveness to public issues made him stand out as a unique leader.

Yediyurappa played a crucial role in strengthening the BJP in Karnataka. He ensured that the party was not limited to urban regions but reached farmers, labourers, youth, and backward communities. It is widely believed in political circles that his leadership was the key reason the BJP took root in North Karnataka and the Malnad region. He always upheld the belief that "party workers are the true strength of the party." His simplicity and warmth in welcoming even the smallest worker became a defining feature of his personality.

BJP stalwart BS Yediyurappa in his younger days

Voice of farmers

There is a reason why Yediyurappa is called a farmers' leader. He consistently fought for issues such as farmers' loans, irrigation, support prices, crop damage, and agricultural crises. Even while in the opposition, he strongly raised his voice against the government. As chief minister, he gave high priority to welfare schemes for farmers. Accelerating irrigation projects, allocating greater funds for rural development, and implementing relief programmes for farmers were among the key aspects of his administration.

BJP's victory story in South India

The formation of the BJP government in Karnataka in 2008 changed the direction of state politics. Yediyurappa earned the distinction of being the leader who established the first BJP government in South India. It was not merely an electoral victory; it was recognition of decades of organisational effort. His hard work in making the lotus bloom in Karnataka attracted the attention of the BJP's national leadership. That victory marked the beginning of a new political chapter in the state.

Development-oriented administration

As chief minister, Yediyurappa became known for decisiveness in governance. He placed strong emphasis on development works and launched several initiatives in rural roads, irrigation, drinking water, education, and infrastructure. Along with the development of Bengaluru, he also prioritised balanced development across districts. His governance was guided by the belief that "development must begin from the villages."

Standing with people during crises

People remember Yediyurappa as a leader who stood among them during natural disasters. Whether floods, droughts, or other crises, he personally visited affected areas and reviewed relief operations. More than governing from an office, he believed in going directly to the people and listening to their problems. This approach earned him special support among rural communities.

Leadership forged through struggle

Yediyurappa faced numerous challenges in his political life — internal politics, criticism from opponents, and situations where he lost power. Yet, he never lost his fighting spirit. Even during difficult times, he retained the trust of party workers. Believing that the blessings of the people were his greatest strength, he repeatedly returned as the central figure in Karnataka politics. This reflects the depth of his public support.

He won the hearts of workers

Simplicity and humanity occupy a special place in Yediyurappa's personality. Despite being a major leader, his ability to mingle warmly with ordinary people brought him even closer to the masses. Visiting workers' homes, listening to their problems, and helping them during hardships made party workers see him as "one among us."

Under the leadership of Narendra Modi, the BJP has grown into a strong national force, and Yediyurappa is among those who laid the foundation for that strength in Karnataka. He acted as a bridge between the national leadership and state workers.

Not just a political force, but an era

Yediyurappa is not merely a political leader; he is an emotion. His life stands as proof that with hard work, struggle, dedication, and public connection, even an ordinary worker can rise to occupy the highest office in the state. In Karnataka politics, the name Yediyurappa is not just the name of a person — it is a symbol of confidence for millions of workers.

If the BJP has today become such a powerful force in Karnataka, it is because of Yediyurappa's decades of effort, sacrifice, and organisational strength. Leaders who live in the hearts of the people are rare, and among such rare leaders, the name of Yediyurappa will always remain at the forefront. This leadership, shaped through struggle, will continue to shine as a source of inspiration for future generations.

—The writer is a BJP spokesperson

SALAR ساڈھ

Iran's yuan trade raises US petrodollar concerns

After weeks of blockades by Iran and the United States in the Strait of Hormuz, it's clear the narrow waterway is now pivotal to the outcome of the conflict.

The US has begun to escort ships through the narrow passage, but behind the military manoeuvring lies a deeper development: energy security in the Persian Gulf is in a state of profound flux.

As well as the desire by both Iran and the US to control the global flow of oil, gas, helium and fertilisers from the region, the United Arab Emirates (a key US ally) has withdrawn from OPEC in what's been called a major blow to the oil cartel.

On top of this, Iran has announced plans to introduce tariffs in the Strait of Hormuz as a form of reparations for the damage caused by the war.

If imposed, these tariffs are estimated to be worth between $40 billion and $50 billion a year to Iran, and would potentially allow it to mitigate the impact of US economic sanctions.

Crucially, tariffs would be a way to cultivate stronger relations with China because they would be denominated in Chinese yuan, not US dollars. This has the potential to significantly alter regional and global power balances.

In fact, such payments have reportedly already been made by vessels going to China, India and Japan, with the Iranian parliament working to formalise the process. (Iran has also begun accepting payments in cryptocurrency.

50 years of dominance

If Iran can continue to charge these tariffs, it could tilt regional influence away from the US towards China and Asia by eroding the historical dominance of the petrodollar.

Essentially, the petrodollar system has seen the pricing and trading of oil in US dollars. The term dates from the 1970s when the US asked Saudi Arabia to exclusively price its oil in US dollars in return for military aid.

This spread across OPEC (the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries), becoming the benchmark of the global oil trade, bolstering the US dollar as the global reserve currency and underwriting US power.

Oil-producing nations amassed huge petrodollar surpluses – too much to invest only in their own economies – which were funnelled or "recycled" back into US securities and stocks, and other countries' sovereign wealth funds.

They have become the primary source of revenue for OPEC members, as well as non-member oil exporters Qatar and Norway. This ties these countries to Washington and gives the US significant financial leverage in global affairs. The flow of petrodollars helps finance US deficits and reduce US borrowing costs.

> Asked If major regional players such as the UAE, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia pay Iranian tariffs in "petroyuans", economist Antonio Bhardwaj has said, it would mark: The systematic erosion of the petrodollar system

A new paradigm?

If major regional players such as the UAE, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia pay Iranian tariffs in "petroyuans", economist Antonio Bhardwaj has said, it would mark: The systematic erosion of the petrodollar system and the emergence of the petroyuan as a credible, institutionally embedded alternative framework for settling global energy transactions.

As international relations analyst Pakizah Parveen has written, we would see the emergence of: A bifurcated global oil market. Barrels from compliant parties would move through Hormuz in yuan. In contrast, non-compliant parties would incur significantly higher costs in dollar-denominated barrels.

Such a choice would affect major US allies such as Pakistan, South Korea, Japan and the Philippines, all of which have faced severe economic pressures as a result of the upheavals in the Gulf and Middle East.

Paying tariffs in petroyuan would draw them towards China and play into Beijing's narrative of being a reliable and more stable economic force. It also mirrors Russia's request for payment in yuan for its oil since 2025.

Decline of the petrodollar

It would be premature to argue that Iranian tariffs will lead to a general "de-dollarisation" of the world economy. But they may be a step towards a devaluation of the US dollar. By extension, any move by other countries away from the US dollar is a move away from dependence on the US financially and politically. It would also aid China's push to internationalise the yuan.

For the first time since 1996, global central banks hold more gold in their reserves than US debt securities. The BRICS group of countries may move further away from US influence, with China, India and Brazil all having reduced their US holdings in 2025. *—The Conversation*

LETTERS

write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

The extraordinary life of naturalist David Attenborough

DAVID WITH GORRILAS: Attenborough made friends with mountain gorillas in Kenya in the 1970s —BBC

The BBC is hosting a party for David Attenborough at the Royal Albert Hall. Cinemas are playing his nature films. Friends have spent weeks lavishing praise on the man and his work.

But he is likely to be uncomfortable with all the attention as he celebrates his 100th birthday on Friday, said Alastair Fothergill, the producer of some of Attenborough's most well-known documentaries.

"He's always been very clear to all of us that work with him: Remember, the animals are the stars, I'm not, Fothergill told The Associated Press. "So, yes, surprisingly for one of the most famous men on the planet, he doesn't like being famous at all."

Glorious gorillas

But Attenborough has had to accept the accolades this week as scientists, politicians and conservationists celebrated the man who has brought frolicking gorillas, breaching whales and tiny poisonous frogs into living rooms around the world for more than 70 years.

But behind the stunning images was can attention to scientific accuracy that helped teach people about complex subjects like evolution, animal behaviour, and biodiversity.

And as the evidence mounted, he began to sound the alarm about climate change, ocean plastic and other human-caused threats to the planet.

That helped people understand not only how life evolved but, more importantly, why we have to protect it, said Ben Garrod, an evolutionary biologist at the University of East Anglia and himself a broadcaster who has worked alongside Attenborough.

Attenborough, Garrod believes, initially saw himself as a neutral observer but was compelled to speak out when he saw that politicians, business leaders and the public weren't taking the emergency seriously.

"He is showing you the majesty, the ferocity, the fragility of the natural world. He shouldn't have ever had to turn to policymaking and advocacy," Garrod said.

Fond of fossils from the start

His fascination with nature developed when he was a young boy, riding his bicycle into the surrounding countryside where he collected treasures such as abandoned birds' nests, the shed skin of a snake and, most importantly, fossils.

"I'd find a fossil and show it to my father, and he'd say 'good, good, tell me all about it.' So I responded and became my own expert," Attenborough told Smithsonian Magazine in 1981.

He went on to study geology and zoology at the University of Cambridge.

In 1952, Attenborough joined the BBC, working behind the scenes on "everything from ballet to short stories." After he'd been there about two months, the capture of a "living fossil" off the coast of East Africa caused an international stir, and he was asked to produce a short piece about the coelacanth.

That story was told in the studio by Professor Julian Huxley, an evolutionary biologist, who used pickled wildlife specimens and a photograph of a coelacanth to explain the fish's significance.

But Attenborough thought television could do more.

"I'd always wanted to do films on animals around the world," he recalled in a 1985 interview with The Associated Press. "But the attitude was, we've got TV cameras in the studio. What's this about spending money abroad?"

In 1954, he finally persuaded the BBC to let him accompany a London Zoo team that travelled to West Africa to collect specimens. That began a decade as host and producer of "Zoo Quest," kick-starting his career in the field.

The privilege of his life

One of the most famous moments of that long career came during the 1979 series 'Life on Earth,' when Attenborough encountered a family of mountain gorillas in a forest on the border of Rwanda and what was then Zaire (now Congo).

During that scene, voted one of Britain's top TV moments of all time, a young gorilla lies across his body while several babies try to remove his shoes. Attenborough grins, laughs and is speechless with delight.

"I honestly don't know how long it was," Attenborough later told the BBC. "I suspect it was about 10 minutes, or even a quarter of an hour. I was simply transported." "Extraordinary, really," he reflected. "It was one of the most privileged moments of my life."

A character everyone could understand

Attenborough has combined his knowledge of television, an understanding of his audience and his commitment to science to create a character who could deliver complicated issues surrounding wildlife, conservation and natural history to a mass audience, said Jean-Baptiste Gouyon, a professor of science communication at University College London.

And on this, his centenary, his fans made a point of finding him. In a recorded audio message, he said he thought he would mark the day quietly. As if.

"I've been completely overwhelmed by birthday greetings from preschool groups to care home residents and countless individuals and families of all ages," he said. "I simply can't reply to each of you all separately, but I would like to thank you all most sincerely for your kind messages."

And he isn't planning to stop now, Fothergill said.

"He said to me recently he feels unbelievably privileged that a man in his late 90s is still being asked to work. And, you know, he will go on forever. He will die in his safari shorts." *—PTI*

— IANS

US needs Europe: Italian FM tells Rubio

ROME, 8 MAY

Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani said he told US Secretary of State Marco Rubio that Europe and the United States need each other, as the top American diplomat concluded a two-day visit to Italy and the Vatican. Tajani said he hoped "tensions have been calmed" after recent disagreements over the US-Israeli war in Iran, adding they discussed the conflict, its spillover into Lebanon, and issues relating to Venezuela and Cuba. "I am convinced Europe needs America — Italy needs America — and the United States also needs Europe and Italy," he said. Rubio also met Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, after a series of meetings in the Vatican a day earlier. —*PTI*

UK border official, ex-Hong Kong cop jailed for spying

LONDON, 8 MAY

A UK border officer and former Hong Kong police officer were convicted on Thursday of spying for China by conducting covert operations in Britain. Peter Wai and Bill Yuen, dual nationals, posed as police to surveil Hong Kong dissidents and activists, including Nathan Law. The jury found them guilty of violating the National Security Act; Wai also faced misconduct charges. Bethan David from CPS said, "These convictions send a clear message that such conduct will not be tolerated on British soil." The case emerged after police disrupted a break-in linked to a fraud case involving Monica Kwong. —*PTI*

— MAGNIFIC

Cyberattack disrupts Canvas, students hit

MISSION, 8 MAY

A cyberattack has taken down the Canvas system used by thousands of educational institutions worldwide, causing chaos ahead of final exams. The hacking group ShinyHunters claimed responsibility, threatening to leak data affecting nearly 9,000 schools, with billions of messages accessed. Instructure, the platform's owner, has not responded. Students expressed concern over being unable to access course materials. The group began threatening to release data on Sunday, with deadlines set for 12 May. Schools, including Harvard, Johns Hopkins, and the University of Iowa, have issued warnings, with some postponing exams. Teachers are finding alternative ways to support students, while officials warn of ongoing cybersecurity risks. The breach underscores the vulnerability of digitised education systems. —*PTI*

Iran, US trade naval strikes as UAE reports drones

Trump calls them 'love bites', says ceasefire still in effect

TEHRAN, 8 MAY

The fragile one-month ceasefire between US and Iran came under strain again on Thursday and Friday as Washington and Tehran said that they traded fire in the Strait of Hormuz. The United Arab Emirates said it responded to another Iranian missile barrage, which wounded three people.

It is unclear how the strikes started with both Iran and the US blaming each other.

The US said it thwarted attacks on three Navy ships and struck Iranian military facilities in the Strait. However, the Iranian Navy said the US began the firing.

US President Donald Trump played down the exchange of fire on Thursday, calling the US strikes a "love tap" in a phone call with ABC. But he reiterated threats to resume full-scale bombing if Iran doesn't accept an agreement to reopen the Strait, through which nearly a fifth of the world's oil once passed, and roll back its nuclear programme. He later said that the ceasefire was still in place.

Iranian state media said the country's forces exchanged fire with "the enemy" on Qeshm Island in the Strait. It also reported loud noises and continuous defensive fire in western Tehran late on Thursday.

Iran's Foreign Ministry said the US strikes were a "clear violation" of the ceasefire. Tehran had previously said it was examining the latest US proposals for ending the war delivered via Pakistan, which is mediating.

Later on Friday, US Central Command says its forces have disabled two more Iranian tankers that were trying to breach an American blockade.

In a social media post, it said a US Navy fighter jet fired into the smoke stacks of ships in the Gulf of Oman after they tried to pull into an Iranian port.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, however, warned that the US begins tends to resort to military adventurism precisely when a diplomatic solution appears imminent, while stressing that the Islamic Republic will never yield to pressure.

"Whatever the cause, the outcome is the same: Iranians never bow to pressure, and diplomacy is always the victim," he posted on X.

ISRAEL KILLS 5

Israel airstrikes killed at least five people in southern Lebanon, while Hezbollah fired rockets on northern Israel without inflicting any casualties, despite the ceasefire

The Lebanon Health Ministry said an Israeli airstrike on the city Toura near the port city of Tyre killed four people and wounded eight. State-run National News Agency reported another airstrike near the southeastern village of Kfar Chouba, killing a paramedic. —*PTI*

NEARLY $1B 'INSIDER TRADING' MINUTES BEFORE REPORT OF DEAL

Unknown traders placed nearly $920 million in crude oil shorts on 6 May, just minutes before Axios published a report claiming that the US and Iran were moving closer to a one-page 14-point deal, according to various online sleuths. Soon after the publication of the report, the price of Brent crude fell by over 10 percent, from $108 per barrel to $97 per barrel.

The US Justice Department is already investigating several bets made totalling at least $7 billion made shortly before major announcements by Trump, US officials or publications citing unnamed sources:

23 MARCH: $500M placed 15 minutes before Trump delayed striking Iran.

17 APRIL: $760M placed 20 minutes before Trump said Hormuz 'reopened'.

7 APRIL: $960M placed hours before ceasefire.

21 APRIL: $430M placed 15 minutes before Trump extended ceasefire.

LULA GIFTS TRUMP IRAN NUKE DEAL SEALED BY TURKEY-BRAZIL

Washington, 8 May: Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva on Thursday said he presented Trump with the 2010 nuclear agreement brokered by Brazil and Turkey with Iran, arguing that the deal had demonstrated a viable diplomatic path for Tehran's nuclear programme. "We--Brazil and Turkey--managed to convince Iran to accept a revised agreement regarding the non-production of nuclear weapons (in 2010). Regrettably, when we finalised that agreement, I do not know why Obama and the European Union--and the rest of the world--decided to ramp up the pressure on Iran," Lula told press after meeting the Republican. "Possibly because the parties who had brokered the deal were 'Third World' nations -- countries that do not belong to the elite club of global powers".

Health workers in protective gear evacuate patients from the MV Hondius cruise ship at a port in Praia, Cape Verde, on Wednesday —*PTI*

Spain gets ready to evacuate hanta-hit ship

MADRID, 8 MAY

Spanish authorities on Friday were preparing to receive more than 140 passengers and crew members on board a hantavirus-stricken cruise ship headed for the Canary Islands, where health officials have said they will perform careful evacuations. The vessel is expected to reach the Spanish island of Tenerife on Saturday or Sunday.

"They will arrive at a completely isolated, cordoned-off area," said Virginia Barcones, Spain's head of emergency services, on Thursday.

The US has agreed to send a plane to the Canary Islands to repatriate its 17 citizens from the cruise ship and the British government will charter a plane to evacuate the nearly two dozen British citizens still on the MV Hondius.

At least three passengers have died, and several others are sick. The World Health Organisation says the risk to the wider public from the outbreak is low.

Hantavirus is usually spread by the inhalation of contaminated rodent droppings and isn't easily transmitted between people. Symptoms usually show between one and eight weeks after exposure, but have up to a 30 per cent fatality rate. —*PTI*

WHO NOTIFIES 12 COUNTRIES

The WHO has notified 12 countries that there is a possibility that the hantavirus could spread there. Those 12 countries are

- Canada
- Denmark
- Germany
- The Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Singapore
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Turkey
- The UK
- The US

B'desh leader asks Mamata to declare WB independent

DHAKA, 8 MAY

Ahead of swearing in of the first BJP-led government in West Bengal, Bangladesh's Jamaat leader Nurul Huda on Friday backed former state chief minister Mamata Banerjee's decision not to resign from her post and exhorted her to declare West Bengal an independent nation free from "non-Bengali" control in New Delhi.

In a video post on social media, Huda welcomed Mamata Banerjee's decision not to hand over power to the BJP and praised her for taking a "brave step" while describing BJP as a party of "vote chor" and "rioter".

Huda's comment against BJP and open support to Mamata Banerjee has sparked a political controversy. Huda further said that Bengal should not accept what he called "alien" and "non-Bengali" control from Delhi.

The Jamaat leader also asserted that 170 million people across Bangladesh would stand in support of West Bengal if Banerjee decides to go against alleged non-Bengali rule of New Delhi. —*Agencies*

Don threatens EU with tariffs if it doesn't ok deal

WASHINGTON, 8 MAY

US President Donald Trump said on Truth Social that goods from the European Union would face higher tariff rates if the 27-member bloc fails to approve last year's trade framework by 4 July.

The announcement on Thursday appeared to be a deadline extension after the President said last Friday that EU autos would face a higher 25 per cent tariff starting this week. Trump made the updated announcement after what he described as a "great call" with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

Still, Trump was displeased that the European Parliament had yet to finalise the trade arrangement reached last year, which was further complicated in February by the US Supreme Court ruling that Trump lacked the legal authority to declare an economic emergency to impose the initial tariffs used to pressure the EU into talks.

Iran mocked US President Donald Trump' efforts to steer through the Strait of Hormuz —*X@IRANINHUNGARY*

Additionally, a federal court ruled that Trump's 10 per cent global tariffs were "invalid" later on Thursday.

Trump claimed that the EU promised to cut their tariffs to zero and gave the EU "until our country's 250th Birthday". —*PTI*

NEW YORK TO RESTRICT ICE DESPITE THREATS

Trump's border czar has threatened to "flood the zone" with immigration agents if New York passes bills bar state and local law enforcements from entering into agreements with US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), but the state seems ready to do so.

Pope Leo XIV caresses a baby as he meets people assisted by the Pompeii Shrine's charity centre, on the first anniversary of his taking oath, on Friday —*PTI*

N KOREA TO DEPLOY NEW ARTILLERY THAT CAN HIT SEOUL

SEOUL, 8 MAY

North Korea announced it will deploy new long-range artillery systems this year capable of striking Seoul and will commission its first naval destroyer within weeks. The statement follows South Korea's recent claims that North Korea's new constitution drops all references to unification, aligning with leader Kim Jong Un's vow to establish a two-state system on the peninsula.

Kim inspected a munitions factory on Wednesday, overseeing production of 155mm self-propelled gun-howitzers with a range over 60km, which he said will enhance land operations. Kim also reviewed North Korea's destroyer Choe Hyon, ordering its transfer to the navy in June after successful tests. Photos showed his teenage daughter with him on the vessel, possibly indicating her as his heir, according to South Korean intelligence.

Kim's military inspections come amid heightened tensions after the constitution revision. North Korea, which has long focused on expanding its nuclear and missile arsenals, now adopts a more hostile stance, branding South Korea its "most hostile enemy" while diplomacy remains stalled. —*PTI*

Deadly double attack hits 2 central Mali villages as violence spreads

BAMAKO, 8 MAY

Double attacks by an armed group have left several people in two villages dead in central Mali, authorities said in a statement. The exact toll was not immediately clear.

The attacks, claimed by Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), followed last month's heavy assaults on the government by the group and a Tuareg separatist group, the Azawad Liberation Front (FLA), where defense minister Sadio Camara, a key figure in the ruling junta was killed.

The latest attacks come as JNIM has declared a food blockade on the capital Bamako, with videos showing trucks being set ablaze.

FUNDED BY THE WEST?

A Russia's African Corps commander said that the militant groups were being funded by the West. The African Corps is a rebrand of Russia's notorious paramilitary Wagner group, accused of atrocities across Syria and Africa. Mali has security ties with Russia.

Russian media outlets have also alleged that Ukraine has been training al-Qaeda linked fighters in drone warfare, but there has been no official confirmation. —*Agencies*

LANKA AIRLINES EX-CEO FOUND DEAD DAYS AFTER BAIL

COLOMBO, 8 MAY

Kapila Chandrasena, former CEO of SriLankan Airlines, was found dead at his home on Friday in suspicious circumstances, days after securing bail in a corruption case.

Chandrasena had been granted bail on Tuesday after being remanded in March on charges of accepting kickbacks linked to aircraft purchases for the national carrier.

Assistant Superintendent of Police F.U. Wootler confirmed his body was discovered at his residence, with police indicating he died by hanging. A day earlier, Colombo Chief Magistrate Asanga S. Bodaragama had issued a warrant for his arrest for breaching bail conditions.

Prosecutors alleged Chandrasena admitted to paying LKR 60 million in bribes to former president Mahinda Rajapaksa in 2015, while his lawyers claimed the statement was made under duress.

The case also implicated former aviation minister Priyankara Jayarathna in Airbus deals. Chandrasena, who led the airline from 2011 to 2015, was arrested in 2019. —*PTI*

REFORM GAINS

Starmer vows to persevere as Labour loses big in local polls

LONDON, 8 MAY

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Friday said he takes responsibility for the "very tough" losses for the Labour Party in local elections, but declined calls to step down, as counting continued across the UK.

Speaking to the press, Starmer said the outcome would not weaken his resolve to tackle economic challenges.

"The results are tough, they are very tough, and there's no sugarcoating it," said Starmer, after Labour lost majorities in key councils including Westminster, Southampton, Exeter, Redditch, Wandsworth, Hartlepool, Tamworth and Tameside.

"We have lost brilliant Labour representatives across the country, these are people who put so much into their communities, so much into our party. And that hurts, and I take responsibility. (But) I'm not going to walk away and plunge the country into chaos," he said.

Asked if he would lead Labour into the next general election in 2029, he replied: "Yes. It was a five-year term I was elected to do."

Meanwhile, the Nigel Farage-led Reform UK is reporting gains across England, securing hundreds of councillors at the expense of Labour and the Conservatives. "What's happened is a truly historic shift in British politics," Farage said.

More than 4,500 councillors are being elected across 136 councils. —*PTI*

Ratan Tata Trust cancels Tata Sons board meeting

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

A board meeting of Sir Ratan Tata Trust scheduled for Friday to reconsider nominations to the board of Tata Sons was cancelled for unspecified reasons, people with direct knowledge of the matter said.

The meeting was cancelled despite the Bombay High Court declining to stay the meeting of Sir Ratan Tata Trust (SRTT), which owns 23.6 per cent of Tata Sons, the holding company of the over USD 180 billion Tata Group.

A petition had challenged the meeting, citing that the trust's current board composition breached statutory limits introduced under the Maharashtra Public Trust (Second Amendment) Act, 2025.

It cited that SRTT currently has six trustees and three of them -- Jimmy Naval Tata, Jehangir HC Jehangir, and Noel Naval Tata -- are lifetime trustees, constituting 50 per cent of the board, exceeding the statutory ceiling of 25 per cent.

The proposed meeting of the board of SRTT was reportedly called to discuss, among others, the reconsideration of Tata Trusts representatives on the Tata Sons board.

At present, Tata Trusts Chairman Noel Tata and Vice-Chairman Venu Srinivasan are on the board of Tata Sons. Last year, former defence secretary Vijay Singh had resigned from the Tata Sons board.

The Friday board meeting was planned amid two trustees -- Srinivasan and Singh -- publicly recommending the listing of Tata Sons, a stand that Noel Tata is totally against. *—PTI*

Lenskart shares drops 3% amid block deal buzz

MUMBAI, 8 MAY

Eyewear retailer Lenskart shares tanked nearly 3 per cent to Rs 473.65 on Friday as existing investors — including Birdseye View Holding and TR Capital Mauritius — reportedly prepare to offload 6.46 per cent equity shares worth over Rs 5,650 crore through block deals. The decline coincided with the six-month expiry of the post-initial public offering (IPO) lock-in period, unlocking approximately 104.74 crore shares worth Rs 51,573 crore, representing 60 per cent of outstanding equity, according to estimates by Nuvama Alternative and Quantitative Research. The board of Lenskart is scheduled to meet on 20 May to approve its financial results for the financial quarter, as reported by Fortune India. *—Agencies*

Rupee falls by 25 paise to close at 94.47

MUMBAI, 8 MAY

The rupee fell 25 paise to close at 94.47 against the US dollar on Friday, after two days of gains, amid renewed US-Iran tensions over the Strait of Hormuz. Forex traders cited concerns over Iran accusing the US of violating a ceasefire, while President Trump claimed the ceasefire remained in effect. Brent oil prices rose slightly The currency opened at 94.58, then dipped to 94.68, before closing at 94.47. Global risk aversion and weak domestic equities also pressured the rupee. Meanwhile, the dollar index was down 0.15 per cent, and oil benchmark Brent crude traded lower at USD 99.81 per barrel *—PTI*

Akasa Air to rev up aircraft financing & leasing ops

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

Akasa Air has set up an entity at the GIFT City in Gujarat to strengthen its aircraft financing and leasing activities. The nearly four-year-old carrier has established Akasa Air Leasing IFSC Private Lmt (AALI) at Gujarat's GIFT City. In a release on Friday, the airline said AALI office would play a pivotal role in advancing its aircraft financing strategy, enabling greater flexibility, cost efficiency, and enhanced access to global capital markets. Currently, Akasa has a 38 Boeing 737 MAX. It has placed an order for 226 such aircraft. *—PTI*

Govt mulls fractional aircraft ownership policy

Gujarat's GIFT City homes India's aviation financing needs

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

The government is working on a policy framework to facilitate fractional ownership in aviation. The Centre recognises aircraft as infrastructure assets needed to strengthen India's aviation financing and leasing ecosystem, Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu said on Friday while addressing the India Aircraft Leasing and Financing Summit 2.0 at GIFT City in Gandhinagar.

Naidu also reported that the ministries of Civil Aviation and Finance are working together to develop forward-looking aviation financing policies, including enabling fractional aircraft ownership in India. He added that the government is also "looking about how to create aircraft as an infrastructure asset," describing both initiatives as "work in progress."

Highlighting the government's vision for GIFT City, Naidu said India does not seek to compete with established global leasing hubs but intends to complement them. The minister explained that the measures are aimed at strengthening India's aviation leasing ecosystem and positioning the country as a major player in global aviation financing.

Pitching GIFT City, also known as Gujarat International Finance Tec-City, as a specialised aviation financing centre, the minister said the ecosystem offers advantages over global hubs such as Dublin, Singapore and Dubai. "Gift City is not merely a competitive option for India-related leasing, but it is the natural home. What we are building at Gift City is a home for India's aviation financing needs," Naidu said.

Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu *–PTI*

- The Centre recognises aircraft as infrastructure assets needed to strengthen India's aviation financing and leasing ecosystem, Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu said on Friday while addressing the India Aircraft Leasing and Financing Summit 2.0 at Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) in Gandhinagar.

Also speaking at the summit was Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, who said, "GIFT City has established itself as a distinct global fintech hub. Last year, too, GIFT City hosted this summit, and I believe the fruitful discussions then will give fresh momentum to building a developed India by 2047." Patel added that "this summit will feature dialogue and defence discussions. Concrete outcomes and benefits from these talks will be visible in the near future." *—ANI*

FINANCIAL PRESSURES

Air India staff must cut costs: CEO

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

Air India will look at reducing frequencies or suspending services on certain routes as some of the flights are either not profitable as before or loss-making due to the airspace constraints, according to its CEO Campbell Wilson.

At a town hall meeting for the staff on Friday, the airline announced certain cost-saving measures, including deferred payment of annual increments and asked the employees to cut down on discretionary spending.

"Sometimes, it'll be pulling back frequency, sometimes it might be suspending routes entirely. We will go back when circumstances change, but we need to be agile to change our network," Wilson told the staff, according to an anonymous source.

The closure of Pakistan airspace, as well as the higher jet fuel prices due to the West Asia conflict, have pushed up the operational costs for the loss-making Air India, which is also in the midst of implementing an ambitious transformation plan.

While cuts in international flights happened in April and is continuing in May, Wilson had also said the situation leaves the airline with no choice "but to further trim schedules for June and July".

On 1 May, Wilson told staff that the airspace and jet fuel price situation remains extremely challenging.

Air India, which currently has around 190 planes in its fleet, operated about 8,000 flights per week and carried nearly 62 million people in the financial year ended 31 March 2026. *—PTI*

ED nabs three Gameskraft developers under PMLA

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday arrested three founders of online gaming platform Gameskraft in an alleged fraud-linked money laundering case, officials said.

They said, Deepak Singh, Prithvi Raj Singh and Vikas Taneja have been taken into custody under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

Deepak Singh and Prithvi Raj Singh were arrested from the Delhi-NCR region and subsequently a transit remand wad obtained for producing them before a Bengaluru jurisdictional court.

Taneja was arrested from Bengaluru and has been produced before a court, the officials said.

The arrests came after the central agency filed a money laundering case against Gameskraft Technologies Ltd and other associated entities taking cognisance of multiple police FIRs related to alleged cheating and fraud.

The Enforcement Directorate also undertook raids in the case on Thursday at 17 locations in Delhi-NCR and Karnataka leading to seizure of certain documents, they said. *—PTI*

TRUMP POLICY

Setback for US tariffs may slow India's BTA talks

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

US President **Donald Trump** faces repeated court setbacks and heightened uncertainty over the tariff regime. Accordingly, India should wait until the United States develops a more stable and legally reliable trade system before concluding the Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA).

A US federal court has struck down the 10 per cent global tariffs slapped by Trump, terming them "invalid" and "unauthorised by law". They said that this ruling is a crucial reminder that Trump's global tariffs violated World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules, and their striking down by US courts is a positive signal for multilateral trade norms.

These new tariffs were imposed by Trump on all countries, including India, on 24 February for 150 days following a US Supreme Court verdict that struck down his earlier sweeping levies.

"The continuing uncertainty around US tariff policy, with major Trump-era tariffs repeatedly struck down by courts, makes any long-term trade commitments by India difficult to justify," GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said.

"At present, the US is also not prepared to reduce its standard Most-Favoured-Nation (MFN) tariffs, while expecting India to lower or eliminate its MFN duties. Under such conditions, any trade deal risks becoming one-sided, with India offering permanent market access concessions without receiving any meaningful tariff benefits in return," Srivastava said.

The US Court of International Trade, in a 2-1 ruling on 7 May, said the Trump administration had exceeded the powers granted by Congress. The tariffs were struck down less than 50 days after their introduction. *—PTI*

Mkt struggles: BSE tanks 516 pts, NSE by 150 pts

MUMBAI, 8 MAY

Markets remained under pressure on Friday, ending lower as renewed West Asia tensions weighed on investor sentiment.

Markets witnessed a risk-off session following fresh US-Iran military action near the Strait of Hormuz, which weakened ceasefire hopes and fueled a rise in oil prices. Local gold and silver prices also eased

The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 516.33 points, or 0.66 per cent, to settle at 77,328.19. During the session, it tumbled 698.09 points, or 0.89 per cent, to 77,146.43. Notably, State Bank of India tanked 6.62 per cent after its March quarter earnings.

HDFC Bank, Bajaj Finance, Axis Bank, UltraTech Cement and Mahindra & Mahindra were also among the laggards.

The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 150.50 points, or 0.62 per cent, to end at 24,176.15. On the weekly front, the BSE benchmark climbed 414.69 points or 0.53 per cent, and Nifty increased by 178.6 points or 0.74 per cent.

The BSE SmallCap Select index went up by 0.34 per cent, while the MidCap Select index dipped 0.01 per cent. While sector-wise, the market showed a mixed trend with a negative bias.

Asian markets were also mixed, with South Korea's Kospi edging higher while Japan's Nikkei 225, Shanghai's SSE Composite and Hong Kong's Hang Seng declined.

European markets traded lower, meanwhile American markets closed in the red on Thursday.

Brent crude reduced 0.25 per cent to USD 99.81 per barrel.

Meanwhile, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 340.89 crore on Thursday.

In the previous session, BSE Sensex ended 114 points lower at 77,844.52. While NSE Nifty dipped 4.30 points to close at 24,326.65. *—PTI*

Q4 profits: SBI gains, Biocon down

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

State Bank of India (SBI) reported a 6 per cent increase in standalone net profit on Friday, posting Rs 19,684 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2026, aided by a decline in bad loans.

The country's biggest lender had earned a profit of Rs 18,643 crore in Q4 of the previous fiscal year.

However, total income declined to Rs 1,40,412 crore in Q4 from Rs 1,43,876 crore a year ago, SBI said. During the quarter, the bank earned an interest income of Rs 1,23,098 crore against Rs 1,19,666 crore a year ago.

The bank saw an improvement in asset quality, with gross non-performing assets declining to 1.49 per cent of the total advances in the fourth quarter from 1.82 per cent as at For FY26, the bank reported 13 per cent increase in profit at Rs 80,032 crore against Rs 70,901 crore in the previous year. *—PTI*

Biocon Q4 profit down 56.8 pc

Biocon Ltd reported a 56.8 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at Rs 198.6 crore in the fourth quarter (Q4), hit by exceptional item outgo of Rs 80.4 crore on various heads, including the impact of new labour codes. The company had posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 459.4 crore in Q4 of the previous fiscal, Biocon Ltd said in a regulatory filing on Thursday. The company's board has recommended a final dividend of 50 paise per equity share of face value of Rs 5 each for the financial year, per shareholders' approval.

SINCE 28 FEBRUARY

Oil giants bleed r30,000cr as fuel prices held

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

India's state-run oil marketing companies bled an estimated Rs 30,000 crore since mid-March while keeping fuel and LPG supplies flowing without raising retail prices despite facing an energy disruption.

This loss would have swelled to nearly Rs 62,500 crore had the government not cut excise duty on petrol and diesel by Rs 10 per litre each, they said.

Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) have maintained uninterrupted supply without raising retail prices despite a more than 50 per cent surge in input costs.

State-owned Indian Oil refinery *–INDIAN OIL*

The three companies together incurred about Rs 30,000 crore in under-recoveries.

Sources said the government cut excise duties and absorbed part of the fuel cost burden, estimated at Rs 24 per litre for petrol and Rs 30 per litre for diesel at peak crude prices. Excise duty on petrol was reduced to Rs 3 per litre from Rs 13, while diesel duty was cut to zero from Rs 10.

Despite soaring global crude prices, retail fuel prices in India have remained unchanged since the first strike on 28 February.

Oil benchmark Brent crude was hovering around USD 72 per barrel before US-Israel strikes on Iran in February sparked a sharp escalation in West Asia tensions.

This conflict disrupted traffic through the Strait of Hormuz—a vital route for India's energy imports—leading to a spike in demand amid reports of stalled tanker movements and supply fears.

While global fuel prices spiked, India kept petrol at Rs 94.77 and diesel at Rs 87.67, ensuring stable supplies without the mobility restrictions adopted elsewhere. *—PTI*

KPIT Tech co-founder Ravi Pandit dies

PUNE, 8 MAY

Ravi Pandit, co-founder and chairman of KPIT Technologies, died at the age of 75 on Friday in Pune.

Over a career spanning more than three decades, Pandit played a key role in advancing technology-led initiatives globally. He represented Indian industry: Mahratta Chamber of Commerce president, and Research chair at Central Electronics Engineering Research Institute. Beyond business, he was associated with civic, educational and policy institutions. *—PTI*

AI intergration: Cloudflare to cut 20% of workforce

SAN FRANCISCO, 8 MAY

American internet services company Cloudflare said on Thursday it would cut about 20 per cent of its workforce as it restructures operations around the adoption of AI tools, Reuters reported.

Cloudflare CEO Matthew Prince and co-founder Michelle Zatlyn said in a message to employees that the company was reimagining every team and function to operate in what they described as an agentic AI era.

The internet infrastructure and cybersecurity company plans to cut more than 1,100 jobs globally—roughly 20 per cent of its 5,156-strong workforce. It expects to incur charges between USD 140 million and USD 150 million related to the layoffs in the second quarter, for which it also forecasts revenue slightly below Wall Street expectations.

The company projects second-quarter revenue between USD 664 and 665 million, just missing the USD 665.3 million mark. Adjusted earnings are expected at 27 cents per share.

Cloudflare shares dropped roughly 19 per cent in extended trading despite good Q1 results. *—Agencies*

-PTI

Bharadwaj leads Indian shooters on Day One

ALMATY, 8 MAY

Shapath Bharadwaj delivered two perfect series and scored 21 shots in the third series to finish day one of the men's trap event with 71 hits out of 75 at the International Shooting Sports Federation (ISSF) World Cup Shotgun at the Asanov Shooting Club in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on Friday. Manisha Keer, with a score of 69, was the best-placed Indian woman in her trap event.

Shapath started the day with two perfect rounds but only managed 21 in the third series, dropping him down the standings. Vivaan Kapoor also shot a perfect 25 in his second series, after starting with 22 hits and finishing the day with 23 shots in the third series.—*PTI*

India beats Lebanon in AFC U-17 Women's AC 2026

SUZHOU, 8 MAY

Two goals in each half saw India thrash Lebanon 4-0 to put one foot into the quarterfinals of the AFC U-17 Women's Asian Cup 2026, in Suzhou, China, on Friday.

Pritika Barman scored a brace, while Alva Devi Senjam and Joya netted a goal each as the Young Blue Tigresses pulled off a commanding win in their final group-stage match. The scoreline took India's goal difference to -1, compared to Group C sides Philippines (-13) and Chinese Taipei (-14), who will face each other later in the day. Only if either of them pulls off a landslide victory, with a margin of victory of 12 goals or more.—*PTI*

Global Chess League returns to India for 4th season

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

The fourth season of the Global Chess League (GCL), a joint initiative of Tech Mahindra and FIDE, will be held in India, aiming to leverage the country's booming chess culture, the tournament organisers announced on Friday.

The host city will be revealed soon, the GCL said.

The third season of the event was held in Mumbai last December, in which Alpine SG Pipers emerged triumphant.

The league has already changed the format of the game, and it will continue its emphasis on rapid-fire matches, mixed-gender teams, and high-intensity competition to promote chess as a premier spectator sport.—*PTI*

-PTI

Bhatia tied 13th after first round of Truist C'ship

CHARLOTTE, 8 MAY

Akshay Bhatia opened his week at the Truist Championship with a three-under 68 to lie tied 13th, five shots behind first-round leader Matt McCarty, who fired a superb 63 here.

Fellow Indian-American Sahith Theegala was tied 30th at one-under after completing 15 holes before play was suspended, while Sudarshan Yellamaraju carded an even-par 71 to be placed tied 33rd.

Bhatia began his round on the back nine and returned a bogey-free card, picking up birdies on the second, 15th and 18th holes.

Theegala mixed three birdies with two bogeys before play was halted. He started brightly with a birdie on the third hole but dropped shots on the eighth and ninth to close the front nine.—*PTI*

GT eye top-four push against RR

Both GT and RR have six wins and four defeats in 10 matches each

JAIPUR, 8 MAY

GT VS RR @ Sawai Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur
Match starts at
7.30 pm IST

An in-form Gujarat Titans will look to extend their winning run and break into the top four when they face a struggling Rajasthan Royals in a crucial mid-table Indian Premier League clash in Jaipur on Saturday.

Only the net run rate separates the 2022 edition winners, the Gujarat Titans (-0.147), from the fourth-placed 2008 champion, the Rajasthan Royals (0.510), in the points table, as the two teams have fared alike so far. Both GT and RR have six wins and four defeats in 10 matches each.

But the Shubman Gill-led side will fancy their chances against the wobbly Royals, who have suffered three defeats in their last five matches. The Titans have racked up three wins on the trot and are looking to break into the top four. Royals captain Riyan Parag struck 90 in RR's first-innings score of 225 for six, but it was not enough against Delhi Capitals, who overhauled it with seven wickets and five balls to spare. It was the second such instance in a row when a first-innings total in excess of 220 could not be defended by the Royals.

Rajasthan Royals and Gujarat Titans are celebrating their teamst -*IPL*

While Rajasthan Royals are indeed top-heavy with Vaibhav Sooryavanshi (404 runs), Yashasvi Jaiswal (312), and even Dhruv Jurel (290) doing the heavy lifting, they will need their skipper to fire big in the lower order, which has only Donovan Ferreira (229) hitting at 150 or above.

Jurel has undoubtedly been a vital cog in the Royals' batting line-up, but the right-handed batter has been guilty of not accelerating at the top.

In his last three outings, Jurel has scored 42 off 30 balls, 16 off 20 balls, and 42 off 30 balls at No. 3, and these numbers certainly warrant further improvement in a season where no total, batting first, is safe.

While IPL 2026 has been even more severe on the bowlers, the Royals will have to find solutions to their bowling woes, especially in the middle overs. —*PTI*

Dhoni got angry when I celebrated too much: Ashwin

Retired India spin great Ravichandran Ashwin on Friday revealed that his excessive celebration after dismissing Mahendra Singh Dhoni in the Challenger Trophy early in his career had actually annoyed the iconic former captain.

Speaking on JioStar's 'The Ravichandran Ashwin Experience', the off-spinner recalled that he thought his dismissal of Dhoni could give him a chance to play for Chennai Super Kings in IPL.

"Muttiah Muralitharan was in the team, a legend, bowling his full quota, so I wasn't getting chances (to play for CSK). I didn't play in 2008, but in 2009, I got my first game in Cape Town, against the Mumbai Indians, against Sachin Tendulkar. Between 2009 and 2010, I still didn't get many opportunities," said Ashwin, who retired from all forms of international cricket in December 2024.

I felt good after Virat Kohli's wicket: Prince Yadav

Lucknow Super Giants pacer Prince Yadav dismissed Royal Challengers Bengaluru batting stalwart Virat Kohli with a peach of a delivery during their IPL match here, but the youngster does not want to play it up, saying that he was just happy that his team won.

Mitchell Marsh slammed a superb 111 off 56 balls as bottom-placed Lucknow Super Giants snapped a six-match losing streak with a nine-run DLS victory over Royal Challengers Bengaluru in a rain-curtailed IPL match here on Thursday. In the second over of RCB's run chase of 210, Prince Yadav produced a sensational delivery to bamboozle Kohli. The 140-kmph ball nipped back in to crash into Kohli's off stump. It marked Kohli's first IPL duck since a first-ball dismissal against Rajasthan Royals in April 2023. LSG, who had posted 209 for 3 courtesy Mitchell Marsh's 111, went on to win by nine runs under the DLS method, stopping RCB at 203 for 6 in 19 overs.

KSCA requested 10,057 complimentary IPL tickets: BCCI source

BENGALURU, 8 MAY

The Karnataka State Cricket Association's request on Friday for an additional 10,057 complimentary tickets led to the shifting of IPL final and playoff matches from the M Chinnaswamy Stadium here, a BCCI source has said.

Bengaluru was to host the final, going by convention, as the Royal Challengers Bengaluru are the defending champions.

But IPL chairman Arun Dhumal told PTI that it became "untenable" to have the finale here due to high demand for complimentary tickets at the relatively low-capacity venue, which can only accommodate 35,000 fans.

This season's playoff fixtures will be held in Dharamsala (May 26) and New Chandigarh (May 27 and 29), while the title clash (May 31) will be staged at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

"The KSCA is entitled to complimentary tickets amounting to 15 per cent of the stadium capacity. However, KSCA requested an additional 10,057 tickets," the source revealed to PTI.

In that, the association needed around 900 passes to meet the demands of the state legislature members alone.

"KSCA agreed to provide three complimentary passes each to MLAs/MLCs (approximately 900 passes in total).

"Further, the Expert Committee and the additional commitments with the Government of Karnataka would have required an additional 750 complimentary tickets in addition to a limited number of hospitality complimentary passes beyond the standard 15 per cent." —*PTI*

Gukesh beats Caruana in final round of Rapid event

WARSAW, 8 MAY

World champion D Gukesh defeated American Grandmaster Fabiano Caruana in the ninth and final round to be tied fourth in the Super Rapid and Blitz Tournament's rapid competition here, sustaining a welcome return to form after struggling for the past few months. The Indian is tied fourth with 18 more rounds to come in the blitz section that follows the rapid event.

Gukesh, Caruana, and Duda Jan-Krzystzof of Poland tied for the fourth spot on nine points apiece. —*PTI*

REAL MADRID IMPOSES MASSIVE FINES ON VALVERDE

LONDON, 8 MAY

Real Madrid has handed massive fines to players Federico Valverde and Aurélien Tchouaméni after both were involved in a bust-up during training, the La Liga team said on Friday."Given these circumstances, Real Madrid has decided to impose a financial penalty of five hundred thousand euros on each player, thus concluding the corresponding internal procedures," it said in a release. A day earlier, the Los Blacos had said that they would punish the midfielders after a clash at the club's training ground left Valverde needing hospital treatment. —*PTI*

Shanto and Mominul make it B'desh's day

MIRPUR, 8 MAY

Pakistan won the toss, but Bangladesh went on to win all three sessions. A majestic hundred from Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto put his side in firm control at the end of the first day in Mirpur, finishing with 301 for the loss of four wickets. As a measure of the degree of control they exercised, they scored 101, 100, and 100 in each session, respectively, pacing the innings exactly as required across the day.

Alongside Mominul Haque, who missed out on his own century by nine runs, Shanto put on 170 for the third wicket that Pakistan's bowlers appeared largely at a loss to disrupt for the first two sessions, guiding them away from a perilous first hour that saw them lose their openers cheaply. When Pakistan finally prised the two out, an unbeaten 48 from Mushfiqur Rahim held the innings together.

Bangladesh 301 for 4 (Shanto 101, Mominul 91, Abbas 1-51) vs Pakistan. —*PTI*

I know cricket is India's No.1 sport, but basketball has potential too: Divac

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

Basketball Hall of Famer and former Serbian basketball player Vlade Divac poses with participants during the 'Freedom 250 Slam Dunk Experience' on Friday in New Delhi -*PTI*

He is well aware that cricket is India's "number one sport," but NBA great Vlade Divac is nonetheless hopeful that basketball too will find its space in the country.

The 7'1" tall Sacramento Kings great was at the American Centre here on Friday for some dribbling and passing with over 100 children from various schools and academies in the national capital.

"I have to tell you, I am surprised, (the kids) they are pretty good," he said after the 'Freedom 250 Slam Dunk Experience' event organised by the US Embassy and Sacramento Kings.

Divac stood next to the makeshift hoop set up on the front lawns of the American Centre and encouraged the young aspirants with a warm smile and some high fives as they queued up to take a shot at the basket for an appreciative glance from the 58-year-old legend. The owner of two Olympic silver medals (1988 and 1996) and two world championship golds (1990 and 2002) was generous in his support, even lifting one kid to help him complete his attempt.

"I was very impressed with the girls; they were good at shooting the ball. It's a big country and a lot of kids around. India should be a power in the world if they do the right thing.

"NBA is a global brand, and in future, we can have some NBA players from India," said the former player, who has also dabbled in administration besides engaging in humanitarian work for homeless refugees in Africa and his native Serbia.

India has had a presence in the NBA in the past when Canada-born Sim Bhullar became the first player of Indian descent to sign up for the league in 2015. Incidentally, it was the Sacramento Kings who penciled him in with Divac as the team's Vice President of Basketball Operations at that time. —*PTI*

EUROPEAN FINAL IN 44 YEARS

Aston Villa routs Nottingham Forest to reach final against Freiburg

LONDON, 8 MAY

John McGinn scored twice as Aston Villa routed Nottingham Forest 4-0 in the Europa League to reach its first major European final in 44 years.

McGinn's second-half goals on Thursday were almost identical left-footed shots from the edge of the area to cap a dominant display at Villa Park in the second leg of the all-English semifinal to the delight of roaring fans, including Prince William, who joined in singing "Sweet Caroline" after the final whistle.

Villa advanced 4-1 on aggregate and will face German club Freiburg in the May 20 final in Istanbul. Freiburg beat 10-man Braga 3-1 on Thursday to advance 4-3 on aggregate.

It's Villa's first major European final since it triumphed over Bayern Munich in the European Cup in 1982.

Villa coach Unai Emery has won the Europa League title four times — three with Sevilla and one with Villarreal.

Emiliano Buendía was involved in the opening two goals. The midfielder left behind several defenders on the left side of the area and sent a low cross for Ollie Watkins to tap in the opener in the 36th minute. Watkins scored just minutes after he got his head bandaged from a cut sustained in a clash of heads with Forest defender Morato. Freiburg overturned a 2-1 deficit from the opening leg. Mario Dorgeles, who scored the winner for Braga last week in Portugal, was shown a straight red in the seventh minute after fouling Jan-Niklas Beste, who would have had only goalkeeper Lukáš Hornícek to beat. It took the Bundesliga team only 12 minutes to punish the visitors when Lukas Kübler scored the first of his two goals. —*PTI*

DON'T WANT MONEY

Just want to know our country is watching: Satwik

NEW DELHI, 8 MAY

Ace doubles badminton player Satwiksairaj Rankireddy on Friday said his recent comments on the muted public reception after the Indian team won the Thomas Cup bronze medal were not intended to seek "money or grand parades" but to urge the people "to celebrate every win, big or small" in all sports.

The world No.4 pair of Satwik and Chirag Shetty, the Asian Games champions, were part of the Indian team that recently claimed a bronze medal in the Thomas Cup in Denmark, but the former had expressed his emotions on social media on the lack of recognition for their effort. After returning home from Denmark, Satwik wrote, "Back home now. As usual, no one knows what happened over the past two weeks, and it seems like no one really cares." On Friday, 25-year-old Satwik put out another social media post to elaborate on his thoughts.

"The last few days have brought a lot of attention to my recent comments regarding the lack of a reception for our Thomas Cup bronze medal. While I am grateful for the overwhelming support and encouragement, I want to clarify my intent because I see many people deviating from the original point," Satwik wrote. "My words did not come from a place of wanting personal fame or taking credit away from anyone else's achievements. I have the utmost respect for every athlete who brings glory to India, regardless of the sport." "My message was simple: we need to foster a culture that encourages and celebrates every win, big or small," he added. Satwik said excellence in tournaments such as the Thomas Cup represents the years of sacrifice and hard work put in by the shuttlers, and it feels "disheartening" to see their success being "met with silence". "Whether it is a World Cup medal or a podium finish in a global championship like the Thomas Cup, these moments represent years of sacrifice and hard work," he wrote. —*PTI*

Italian Open 2026: Swiatek battles into 3rd round

PARIS, 8 MAY

Three-time champion Iga Swiatek battled into the third round of the Italian Open on Friday with a 6-1, 6-7 (5/7), 6-3 win over Caty McNally.

Swiatek dropped serve in the opening game at the Foro Italico but rattled off the next six to seize control against the 63rd-ranked American.

The Pole seemed on course for a routine victory when she pulled 4-2 in front in the second set, but McNally twice broke Swiatek as the Pole served for the match and then snatched the tie-break.

Swiatek again nudged ahead with a break for a 3-1 lead in the decider. McNally clawed herself level at 3-all before Swiatek took the final three games to book her place in the next round, to her visible relief. "It was a tough match, Caty really played great," said Swiatek. "I had to be patient. For sure, some mistakes happened. It was not an easy match. I'm really happy I was solid at the end and in the important moments. I kept it together." —*PTI*